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BRIEFLY

DIRTY ROTTEN SCOUNDRELS A LESS UNHAPPY SIDEY FOR LAUNER

FLAVOUR OF THE DECADE

THE AUSTRALIAN BROADCASTING TRIBUNAL is currently conducting an inquiry into Australian content on TV The ABT is studying a proposal for a quota which would raise the amount of Australian programs to 60 per cent over the next five years The tribunal believes TV viewers should be guaranteed quality production which have an Australian perspective

Deirdre O'Connor, the chairperson of the ABT, has said the tribunal has no intention of limiting co productions with other countries but does want to encourage them to have an Australian point of view

At present 50 per cent of what we view on television is Australian produced, but this includes sport, news, current affairs as well as drama

Many commentators have welcomed the review but have been quick to point out the problems of defining an "Australian perspective" or "look"

Care must be taken that the definition doesn't exclude projects like *The Dunera Boys* which dealt with Jewish refugees coming to Australia aboard the Dunera, or the McElroys' dramatic interpretation of recent events in the Philippines, *A Dangerous Life*

At present overseas documentaries on Australian flora and fauna would qualify as Australian content while Australian films shot overseas, where the script is Australian, produced by Australians, starring Australians and directed by Australians but shot overseas would probably be knocked back. Perhaps we should aim for a "multicultural look" instead

DAVID WILLIAMSON has been hired by Paramount Pictures to write the script for a major feature film The movie is set around the controversial and communist witchhunts conducted by the Republican senator Joseph McCarthy during the 1950s Williamson says the movie will show what can happen when a society is gripped with paranoia. Williamson's screen writing credits include *The Last Bastion*, *The Year of Living Dangerously*, *Phar Lap*, *Emerald City* and *Gallipoli*

NEW YORK TALK

RUTHLESS

I WAS DEVASTATED I was crushed, angry, and sweating I was thinking of punching one of the directors." Not the incoherent ravings of a pyschopath, but the feelings Dale Launer experienced when he first saw the finished film made from his script for *Ruthless People*. Launer is a Hollywood screenwriter whose recent credits include *Ruthless People*, *Blind Date* and *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* Yet he is quick to voice his displeasure on the current state of moviemaking and talk about shortcomings in his own films.

He says that "98 per cent of *Ruthless People*" is his own script – so why should he contemplate violence against Zucker, Abrams and Zucker team who directed it? "I was unhappy because I thought the tone was too broad," he explains. "I had written a more reality based story I had taken a pretty implausible story and had written it to make it as plausible as possible They [the directors] condensed things a little bit and they told the actors to pour it on "

"I had about 20 minutes that ended up being cut from the movie, stuff that would establish sympathy for the kidnappers and tell us more. As it is now, they are rather thin and undeveloped characters. Things that establish sympathy for the protagonists were cut, and I think that's a mistake in movie, always," he states emphatically

Launer's following project, *Blind Date*, is one he would rather erase from his memory "That screenplay was changed 95 per cent," he says angrily. "I had no control over it Blake Edwards [the director] would not only refuse to take my calls, he wouldn't return them, he wouldn't leave a message. He just ignored me. To this day I have never met him."

Launer tried to have his name removed from the credits, but to no avail A Writers' Guild rule states that if a writer is guaranteed $125,000 or more for a first draft, the studio has the final say on the writer's request for anonymity. Launer's name appears on the screen rather than his registered pseudonym, Vidal Grosswanker

On his last project, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, Launer was also credited as executive producer The title doesn't mean much, he says "Executive producers don't have as much control as people think they do. The studios really have the control." Although he says is "less unhappy with *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* than anything else I've done," Launer wants more control He will direct and independently produce his next project, *Love Potion No. 9*.

"Studios won't take a chance with a movie that has a good premise. If they had a good marketing department they could take more chances But with the exception of Disney and Paramount, the studios really don't know how to market movies. If they did, then you could make low budget movies with low budget directors, without stars and with interesting, entertaining premises, market them and make money off them."

Wesley Stricke, who wrote the new courtroom thriller, *True Believer*, has a different story to tell Stricke, rock'n'roll critic turned screenwriter, was assigned by producers Walter Parke and Lawrence Lasker to flesh out a story based on the life of renegade San Francisco lawyer J Tony Scerra. The barrister, played by James Woods, is renowned for his unorthodox clothes and brilliant courtroom tactics

Stricke is far more positive about the treatment of his script "The producers are writers [they wrote *War Games*] and so they understand and respect the screen writer They didn't abuse me because they've been there themselves Also the plot of the movie was so complicated, I was the only guy who understood it. So they couldn't fire me even if they wanted to " The film is an intricate web of corruption, murder and the rekindling of lost ideals, with Woods as a burned out lawyer whose beliefs are reawakened by an earnest young assistant, played by Robert Downey Jr

There was a change of studio and several years delay before *True Believer* finally got off the ground. "It's a crapshoot," Stricke says "there are so many different elements that have to come together at the same time for a movie to get greenlighted. Every time a movie gets made it's some kind of miracle

"The first screenplay I sold I wrote six years ago It's still at Warner Brothers and every four months they talk about making it." He has at least five scripts in circulation at the moment "What you have to do is keep writing them. It's best not to invest too much in each one "

His next project, with the Lasker and Parke, is a thriller that he describes as "a Manchurian Candidate for the late Eighties" It won't have the plot complexity of *True Believer* , he says. "I have a kind of post Vietnam syndrome Just as America was reluctant to get involved in any foreign skirmishes after Vietnam, I don't want to write a screenplay with more than three plot points "

NICKI GOSTIN

ACADEMY AWARDS

DUSTIN HOFFMAN IN RAINMAN

JODIE FOSTER IN THE ACCUSED

WHO FRAMED ROGER RABBIT

BEST ACTOR
Dustin Hoffman *Rain Man*

BEST ACTRESS
Jodie Foster *The Accused*

BEST PICTURE
Rain Man

BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS
Geena Davis *The Accidental Tourist*

BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR
Kevin Kline *A Fish Called Wanda*

BEST DIRECTOR
Barry Levinson *Rain Man*

BEST ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY
Ron Bass and Mary Morrow *Rain Man*

BEST SCREENPLAY
ADAPTED FROM ANOTHER MEDIUM
Christopher Hampton *Dangerous Liaisons*

BEST FOREIGN LANGUAGE FILM
Pelle the Conqueror

BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY
Peter Biziou *Mississippi Burning*

BEST DOCUMENTARY FEATURE
Hotel Terminus: The life and Times of Klaus Barbie

BEST DOCUMENTARY SHORT
You Don't Have to Die

BEST EDITING
Arthur Schmidt *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*

BEST MAKE-UP
Ve Neill, Steve LaPorte, Robert Short
Beetlejuice

BEST ORIGINAL SCORE
Dave Grusin *The Milagro Beanfield War*

BEST ORIGINAL SONG
Carly Simon "Let the River Run"
Working Girl

BEST ANIMATED SHORT
Tin Toy

BEST LIVE ACTION SHORT
The Appointment of Dennis Jennings

BEST SOUND
Les Fresholtz, Dick Alexander,
Vern Poore, Wilhe Burton *Bird*

BEST SOUND EFFECTS EDITING
Charles Campbell and Louis Edemann
Who Framed Roger Rabbit

BEST VISUAL EFFECTS
Ken Ralston, Richard Williams,
Edward Jones, George Gibbs
Who Framed Roger Rabbit

BEST ART DIRECTION
Art Director Stuart Craig and
Set Decorator Gerard James
Dangerous Liaisons

BEST COSTUME DESIGN
James Acheson *Dangerous Liaisons*

SPECIAL AWARDS

HONORARY AWARDS
National Film Board of Canada
Eastman Kodak

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT
Animation director Richard Williams
Who Framed Roger Rabbit

AWARD OF MERIT
Sound Engineers Ray Dolby and Ioan Allen

HONORARY LAWYER AWARD
Lens Designer Gordon Henry Cook

FILM FINANCE

FUN FUN FUND

THE NEWLY ESTABLISHED Film Finance Corporation aims to underpin $100 million worth of film and television production by June 1989, and at least $340 million over the next three years. But to be eligible for FFC funding the project must have 30 per cent private sector investment and this is proving difficult for many producers.

To date most of the successful applicants have avoided the problem by investing in the project themselves. This is well and good if you are a producer who has a proven track record and/or has access to finance, but what about independent producers who, in most cases, don't have any money of their own to invest?

David Pollard, the head of the FFC, admits there will be some teething problems but expects the situation to change once more corporate investors become involved. Unfortunately this may take a while and require a lot of persuasion on the FFC's part. At present some financial institutions such as Potter Partners and D and D Tollhurst don't see film as a viable investment, while others such as NZI and BT Australia are keeping a low profile, which in BT Australia's case means they haven't invested in a film project for over eight months. For a detailed report of the FFC see page 21

1989 AUSTRALIAN LOGIES

PUBLIC VOTING CATEGORIES

MOST POPULAR PERSONALITY ON AUSTRALIAN TV: Daryl Somers

MOST POPULAR ACTOR: Craig McLachlan

MOST POPULAR ACTRESS: Annie Jones

MOST POPULAR SERIES: *Neighbours*

MOST POPULAR TELEMOVIE OR MINI SERIES: *The Shiralee*

MOST POPULAR ACTOR IN A TELEMOVIE OR MINI SERIES: Bryan Brown

MOST POPULAR ACTRESS IN A TELEMOVIE OR MINISERIES: Rebecca Smart

MOST POPULAR LIGHT ENTERTAINMENT/COMEDY PROGRAM: *The Comedy Company*

MOST POPULAR LIGHT ENTERTAINMENT COMEDY PERSONALITY: Maryanne Fahey

MOST POPULAR CURRENT AFFAIRS PROGRAM: *A Current Affair*

MOST POPULAR SPORTS COVERAGE: Olympic Games

MOST POPULAR MUSIC VIDEO: "Age of Reason"

MOST POPULAR NEW TALENT: Nicolle Dickson

PANEL VOTING CATEGORIES

HALL OF FAME: Bryan Brown

MOST OUTSTANDING ACTOR: John Wood

MOST OUTSTANDING ACTRESS: Joan Sydney

MOST OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS: *Four Corners*

MOST OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN TV NEWS: Michael Venus

MOST OUTSTANDING SINGLE DOCUMENTARY OR SERIES: *Nature of Australia*

MOST OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT BY REGIONAL TELEVISION: RTQ7 Rockhampton

LETTERS

THE END OF THE WORLD MOVIES #1

I FIND IT EXTREMELY ODD that my feature film, *Sons of Steel*, remains totally ignored in Australia and elsewhere. It was missed out of the excellent article in your March issue, *The End of the World Movies*, and to add insult to injury, Lewis Morley, who created the creatures for the film, under the production design of Graham (Grace) Walker, also failed to mention it.

Sons of Steel is a 35mm Ultra Stereo science fiction film, concerning the politics of an 'Orwellian' Australia towards the year 2000, as seen through the eyes of a rock singer. It was written and directed by me and produced by James Michael Vernon. Up until recently it was ignored by Australian film distributors, however, it will be released onto the theatrical circuit by Cinema 100 in September this year.

I'm not sure if this attitude toward my film has come from a lack of 'local awareness' or the great Australian apathy syndrome. The film has had great response overseas. It has been sold in 15 countries by our foreign rights distribution company, The Image Organization of Los Angeles. Out of those 15 countries, Japan is by far the most enthusiastic, therefore the world premiere will take place in Tokyo. What a crying shame – one would like to have some support in one's own backyard. Are the Japanese so smart that only they can see the potential of our country and its talents? One would have to be blind Freddy to think otherwise.

For the most part Australian distributors claim my film has a limited market in this country. We intend to prove them wrong. The film is a science fiction musical in the rock'n'roll genre. The latter is the area Australian distributors are nervous about. However, as the film is supported by an original record album performed by the star of the film, who is in fact a singer/actor, I believe they are wrong. There is indeed a large rock'n'roll market in Australia, as proved by the success of rock videos, MTV, the video rental market, radio and record sales. Do these people aged between 14 and 35 who buy rock records not go to see movies like *Cocktail*? I think it more likely that the distributors are apathetic toward Australian product, especially sci-fi or rock n roll, and they are reluctant to take part in the development of promoting original product, unless it appeals to their 'broad audience' criterion. Theatrical distributors make money for jam with their US major releases. Why can't they be forced, in the way Australian radio and television is, to lose a few bucks by having an Australian content quota?

What is the difference between music and film, when both mediums rely on exhibiting or playing product? Has television suffered from its Australian quota? No.

It is therefore my conclusion that the only way to alter these conditions is for supporters of the Australian film industry, and more particularly the sci-fi and rock'n' roll genre, to rally and assist the propagation of indigenous product by promoting it to the public and creating a demand.

As to the critical assessment of the Australian science fiction films mentioned in the article, I agree in principle that for the most part these films had some problems, but all of these Australian films were made, like mine, on a shoestring budget, a condition that promotes problems. I know one can't offer that as an excuse to the audience, but how many of the films mentioned received a 'fully fledged' (promoted) release, to allow them to be judged by the public? I think the answer speaks for itself: three films – *Thunderdome*, *Razorback* and *The Last Wave*, (possible *Patrick*). How can *Incident at Raven's Gate* compete with the likes of *Alien Nation* without a 30 cinema release? Due to the nature of the financing mechanism here, Australian films suffer a lack of funds at the most vital stage, marketing. If this were not the case and funds were allocated for the publicity, we'd most certainly have a different story. But what Australian film can afford to set aside approximately a third of its budget for that purpose?

As you are well aware, science fiction has always received the wrath of the critics – even *A Clockwork Orange* suffered. I believe that the essence of science fiction as an art form, lies in the expression of the imagination. I also believe the public responds to such a challenge, as proven by the success of *A Clockwork Orange*, *Star Wars* and *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, clear examples of breaking the rules vehemently adhered to by distributors.

The problems involved with the creation of a science fiction film occur in every facet of the Australian film making machine. It took me four years to convince bankers and the like that a science fiction film is a viable concept, as opposed to a period film. As stated above, these problems continue.

You must forgive me if my letter reads like I have developed a megalithic chip on my shoulder. I assure you I haven't, I'm just a very angry man, who has an undying belief in my film, Australia, its indigenous talent and above all, the genres of science fiction, fantasy and rock'n'roll. Maybe we need the 'Utopia Awards', so that Australian science fiction has the opportunity to gain media acceptance through 'local awareness'. Who knows?

GARY L. KEADY

ABOVE: ROB HAETLEY, STAR OF *SONS OF STEEL*

THE END OF THE WORLD MOVIES #2

JOHN BAXTER'S EXCELLENT summary of the brief history of Australia's science fiction cinema and its rather uncertain future draws attention to the work of a number of writers who are finding difficulty in getting the interest of producers. He makes, however, a major omission: the works of Melbourne author George Turner, whose writing is highly respected both here and overseas. Turner's novels are amongst the finest writing we have produced in any genre and are begging to be made into films. *Beloved Son*, *Vainglory*, and *Yesterday's Men*, which make highly articulate projections into a complex and (for the genre) unusually human near future, form a unique trilogy. They mythologize their locations, generally Melbourne, to a remarkable degree. Indeed, after reading them it is difficult to look at the Shrine in quite the same way again.

They all feature particularly vibrant dialogue and considerable wit which distinguishes them from most contemporary science fiction writing. Most important, though, is Turner's recent novel *The Sea and Summer*. This, again set in Melbourne, proposes an alarmingly recognizable near future distorted by global weather changes, rising sea levels, higher temperatures, etc. Social and economic structures mutate to accommodate these problems and unemployment becomes endemic. Newport becomes one centre for huge towers of government housing which become vertical ghettos and develop complex social characteristics. The book is alarming because it is such a convincing and understanding portrait of us here and now, and not a depiction of some anonymous group of drones in Miami or Southhampton.

Baxter is certainly correct when he says that many local producers misconceive science fiction as an adolescent interest. I would predict that the producer who is wise enough to see the potential in Turner's work will have a worthy successor to the Mad Max films and certainly a uniquely "Australian" vision worth at least 100 navel gazing period dramas.

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➤ AN

INTERVIEW

BY

BRIAN McFARLANE

PHIL NOYCE
DEAD CALM

PHIL NOYCE is the director of *Newsfront*, one of the most popular films of the new Australian cinema, and he has since made several other features as well as directing or co-directing such highly regarded mini series as *The Dismissal* and *The Cowra Breakout*. From Hollywood he speaks about his new film, the thriller *Dead Calm*. Articulate and forthright, he was nevertheless anxious to stress the speculative nature of some of his answers to questions relating to what is now a very diverse career.

BRIAN McFARLANE: Dead Calm *looks like a very considerable departure from your earlier films. How and when did you first get interested in the project that led to this film?*

PHIL NOYCE: It's a departure from the earlier films, but I guess the genesis can be found in Episode 2 of *The Cowra Breakout*, when the Australian soldier Stan and the Japanese soldier Junji find themselves pitted against each other, one on one, in the middle of a clearing on the east coast of New Guinea during the Second World War. It was actually directing that particular hour of that mini series that, for the first time, introduced me to the idea of sustaining tension with a minimal number of elements to manipulate.

It is a departure from my other films but that was the genesis of *Dead Calm*. The book of *Dead Calm* was written, I believe, in the late 1950s or early 1960s by the American writer Charles Williams. It was given to me by a friend of mine, Tony Bill, who produced *The Sting* and directed *My Bodyguard* and *Six Weeks*. I think it was in late 1984 that he gave me the book, when we were sitting down and chatting in his studio in Venice, Los Angeles. He just said, "Have a look at this, it might be an interesting film to make down in Australia." I put it in my briefcase but unfortunately I didn't read it for about six months, probably because it was a photostat of the book and it got caught up with a lot of other papers in my briefcase.

When I did read it I had just finished *The Cowra Breakout* and was working on an American anthology series like *Amazing Stories* or *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* – a series called *The Hitchhiker*. It is a very popular one-off drama series, with different stories and different actors each week and it is shown in America on Home Box Office. Once again, each of the stories had a lot of the elements which you see in *Dead Calm*. I immediately responded to the central idea in the book, which was the idea of denied reunification – the yearning of the husband and wife to be reunited. This carried me through the book in one reading and it seemed that there was the germ of a wonderful film there. I then went back to Tony, who revealed that he had in fact wanted to make the film for a long time and had commissioned the script many years earlier, although he had never actually owned the rights to the book itself. The rights were owned by Orson Welles, who was still alive at that time.

I told Tony I would be interested in making the film with him and he said the problem was getting the rights. Time went on and I told the story to George Miller and Terry Hayes back in Sydney. They were immediately enthusiastic. The problem was, of course, that Tony, having shown me the material, had an emotional hen on it – or a moral hen, I guess – so I went back to Tony and told him there was someone else interested. I said that if he ever decided he couldn't or didn't want to make the film to tell me, because I knew someone who might be in a position to buy the rights and raise the production finance.

Orson Welles died in late 1985 and in early 1986 Tony sent a telegram telling me to go ahead and make an approach for the rights, he said he was no longer interested in making the film and was happy for me to see what I could do with it. George Miller then approached Oja Kodar, who was Orson's widow * and one of the actresses in the original *Dead Calm* which Orson shot in the mid-Sixties off the coast of Yugoslavia, under the title of *The Deep* (no relation to the Peter Benchley novel, *The Deep*, which was made into a film much later). While Orson was alive he apparently still harboured the idea of completing the film, although stories about its completion vary. Jeanne Moreau, for example, who was one of the actors in the film along with Laurence Harvey and Welles himself, has claimed that the film was in fact completed – but who knows the real story?

I GAINED INSPIRATION FROM WATCHING HITCHCOCK'S NOTORIOUS BY CONSIDERING THE TECHNIQUES HE USED TO GENERATE DISQUIET IN ME... IT SEEMED THE CLUE LAY IN THE THEORY OF 'LESS IS MORE'... THAT IT IS HOW YOU REVEAL THE FEW ELEMENTS THAT YOU ARE MANIPULATING THAT COUNTS...

In any case, while Orson was still alive he wanted to hold on to the rights. After his death, Oja revealed she was reluctant to sell the rights to anyone in Hollywood because she considered that the Hollywood establishment had persecuted Welles, personally and professionally. But she was intrigued by the idea of someone like Kennedy Miller making the film outside the Hollywood system. I suppose the irony is that on com

POINT TAKEN? NICOLE KIDMAN AND BILLY ZANE IN PHIL NOYCE'S NEW THRILLER DEAD CALM

piction it was then sold back worldwide to Warner Brothers, but I suppose that's inevitable! So that is the long answer to your short question

Were you setting out to make a genre film, a suspense thriller here? Not many Australian movies are as tense as this one, so I wondered to what extent this was your aim, remembering Hitchcock's words about "wanting to put the audience through it" How much of this sort of thinking governed your aim in making the film?

Obviously the ending owes something to what has now become known as a "Carrie" ending, but thinking about the book – which I did for almost a year while I was working on *Shadows of the Peacock* (which was eventually titled *Echoes of Paradise* in Australia) – I watched a large number of films in trying to work out how to approach the material One that gave me the most inspiration, surprisingly, was a Hitchcock film, although I certainly wouldn't say *Dead Calm* was any sort of homage to Hitchcock Nevertheless, I gained inspiration from watching Hitchcock's *Notorious*, not so much in the characterization but by considering the technique he employed to generate an enormous amount of disquiet in me the audience (because there was only me watching a videotape at the time)

I felt that my stomach was starting to get knotted – which of course owes a lot to your allegiance to the characters and how involved you are with them – but I also noticed how he was able to manipulate the elements to produce this feeling of tension within me, and was able to do it without resorting to any of the tricks that have become so commonplace in the horror or suspense films of, say, the last 15 years There was no spine tickling music no rapid cutting a la *Psycho* (which of course came much later than *Notorious*), no special visual effects, no extravagant use of sound effects to try to disorient the audience or shock them

It was in fact the opposite the cutting patterns were quite relaxed, and this gave me the biggest clue on how to treat the material in *Dead Calm*, because it seemed that with so few elements, if we tried to beat the film up (to try to get blood out of a stone) with three characters – or four, with the dog – and two sets, you were soon going to have to work up such a frenzy of filmic manipulation that you would have nowhere to go It seemed that what Hitchcock used was the Mies van der Rohe theory of "less is more", that is, it is how you reveal the few elements that you are manipulating that counts

I was recalling Hitchcock's distinction between suspense and surprise and his preference was for suspense What are your views on that and which do you think matters more in Dead Calm*?*

Well, we did use both but the main one is suspense for example, the suspense of the audience knowing – as Rae doesn't – that Hughie is most likely a mass murderer So you hope the audience feels extreme trepidation about every step she takes near him and every dealing she has with him, a much greater terror than *she* might be feeling, because she does not know as much as the audience does

Obviously we use shock at various moments, sometimes we use shock merely to unnerve the audience, as a device to further the suspense For example the spar (which is really just a rope with a hook on the end of it) falls down when Ingram boards the "Orpheus" for the first time Of course this is apropos of nothing and doesn't really lead anywhere Yet, allied to the graphic death of the child – which I think is the key suspense shot in the film – that particular sequence where the rope falls is a shock moment, but I hope suspense carries over from it well past that scene, because it is intended to unnerve the audience, making them unnaturally aware of the malevolent potential of even inanimate objects

However, it all goes back, for me, to the graphic death of the child in the film's prologue because, at the beginning of the film, we see the loss that binds the couple together, and I hope the audience feels that both Ingram and Rae are totally emotionally dependent on each other That is, the emotional equilibrium of each is dependent on the other partner because no one else in the world can really appreciate the loss that they both feel If they

SAM NEILL AND NICOLE KIDMAN FACE THE FANS IN *DEAD CALM*

are separated, I hope the audience feels that either of them – but particularly Rae, as the one who is set up (at least on the surface) as being the more vulnerable – is liable to go to pieces until they are reunited

But to get back to the baby, I know from attending screenings here in America that some people find it a very shocking image, some have even commented that they can't see what it has to do with the rest of the story I've just explained what I believe it has to do with the rest of the story, but its real importance to me is the way that it heightens the suspense I think it's such a startling image that the audience, having seen it at the beginning of the film and knowing in the back of their minds the rules of drama (that whatever you see at the beginning, you will probably see more of at the end, perhaps in increasing doses) experience a horror, a dread of what *might* be revealed at any moment, and what *could* happen to either of the two main characters It is a disquiet that I hope services the accumulating suspense and tension throughout the rest of the film

I'm very interested in what you say about your view of the relationship between John and Rae Ingram because one of the things that fascinated me was that I never felt absolutely certain about the nature of their relationship It kept me very edgy and I wonder if you had any notion of the audience ever being in doubt about its nature I think that, in the scene where they are trying to get in touch with each other through the boats' communication systems, there is something fascinating and equivocal about the looks which pass between them, and in the end I know it is confirmed in the way you say, but did you plan that as part of the suspense of the film – some suggestion of ambiguity between them, or do you see it as being unstated?

Once again, I'm afraid I have to give a long answer Having been attracted to the project by this central idea of a couple who are separated at sea and who spend most of the book trying to get back together again, we found when we were adapting the book that it was necessary – given our assumption that the notion of denied reunification was the backbone of the narrative – to make several crucial changes The preamble or prologue, Rae's dream, doesn't exist in the book That is something we invented as a means of trying to heighten the audience's overwhelming desire for the couple to be reunited. In addition, the book ends quite differently Another major difference was that on board the "Orpheus" Ingram found not dead bodies but three live people who then have a relationship with him throughout the story and who in fact survive until the end

The scripting and the casting of the film went hand in hand, like so many Kennedy Miller projects, and we were thinking initially about every actress in the world to play Rae As a result of watching the performance Nicole Kidman gave in *Vietnam* and the prompting of Terry Hayes, I really started to think about Nicole Of course all actors carry certain baggage with them – an audience has preconceptions about the types of characters they should play, the types of characters they have played in the past, even the actors' personal lives, which the audience brings into the cinema before starting to suspend disbelief and go with the character When I started to entertain the idea that Nicole could play this part – of course she could never play the part of a 36 year old Rae Ingram (the character's age in the novel) – but we started to consider what implications a woman in her early twenties married to a 40 year-old man would have to our story It seemed to us that the age inequality suggested a very interesting character journey for Rae, a much more interesting one than the book contained

So the second thing that started to fascinate me about the story, which came not from the book but from the way we were developing it, was this young woman's journey – from childhood to adulthood, from subservience to equality in the relationship with her husband. We wrote Ingram as a Navy captain, slightly chauvinistic, anally compulsive, a man who treats his adult wife as less than an adult We tried to characterize their relationship as an initially unequal one, where the Rae character doesn't believe in her own abilities and her husband believes in them even less

I suspect that my reaction here may have been a purely personal one. It was that quite often there were large close-ups, two-shots, of them where they were not actually looking at each other but where there seemed to be something really quite fascinating and potentially ambiguous between them. the sort of excitement you sometimes get in a film that you feel is growing out of the characters and their relationships I assume that is the sort of excitement you were after, rather than just physical action.

Oh yes, absolutely To go back to *The Coward Breakout*, there we had very few elements to manipulate but I found it fascinating that when you removed the possibility of cutting away to another scene, when you took away most of the potential props you could have in a scene, and the characters were almost stripped down naked, how interesting that became because you had almost nothing else to watch *but* the people So much relied on the performances and it was possible to suggest so much because of the bareness of the elements you were dealing with When we came to do this film we set ourselves the task of stripping away as much extraneous material as possible We hoped that in both the relationship and the individual characters, we would be able to reveal through the performances and the gestures as much as possible – as much as we could have if, for example, they were talking out the things we were trying to imply In the case of Hughie I would hope we were able to suggest almost a whole life history in very few words, but mostly through his actions

I think you succeeded in that and I think a lot of the real excitement of the film does come from the fact that the suspense is rooted in the characters and in the possible relationships between them I kept being aware of other films as I was watching Dead Calm *– films as diverse as* Knife in the Water, *John Sturges'* Jeopardy, The Collector, Love from a Stranger, Carrie *(which you mentioned before), and many others. I wonder if you felt you were working in some sort of film tradition, if you were aware of parallels with other films at all, though not in the sense of copying*

AS A DIRECTOR YOU SPEND A YEAR OR TWO YEARS ON ONE PROJECT... YOU LIVE WITH IT, YOU WAKE UP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT WITH IT, YOU CAN'T CLOSE IT OFF... I REACHED THE STAGE WHERE I THOUGHT 'MY GOD, I'M NOT GOING TO KEEP MAKING THE SAME SORTS OF FILMS... I WANT TO MAKE SOME DIFFERENT FILMS, I WANT TO HAVE DIFFERENT DREAMS!'

No, not specifically I saw *Knife in the Water* and there are obvious parallels you can draw with it – there are three people in a boat, and so on But apart from *Notorious* I didn't find myself particularly influenced by specific movies, except that having George Miller as the producer probably made me very aware of his work, and its application to particular sequences. Certainly in the sequence where Ingram is rowing back towards the "Saracen", I looked at the *Mad Max* films for inspiration in the manipulation of the elements, because it seemed to me we had a hurdle as high as Mt Everest trying to make a race between a rowboat and a sailboat give the audience as much excitement as one between two high-

powered cars or motor bikes

I think that as a film director you are potentially influenced by everything you see I think you should, like a painter, find inspiration in all the other work to which you are exposed if you consider it appropriate

You seem to like setting yourself technical challenges, such as the blending of the newsreel and the stage material in Newsfront, *the virtuoso New Year's Eve sequence of the crowded streets in* Heatwave *and so on Would you say the comparable challenge in* Dead Calm *is the business of working with so small a cast for most of the film, and in such confinement? How does* Dead Calm *compare as a technical challenge with those other major features you have done?*

Well, it's hard to remember the first two now, I was much younger then! I think *Newsfront* felt like it was harder, partly because we were working on a much smaller budget and so we had to be really inventive

But the sheer technical dexterity involved ?

I think if you're looking for a comparison of degree of difficulty, I would say that the manipulation of the sparse elements is the equivalent and certainly that was the problem that occupied most of my time and preparation All of us gave most of our thoughts to that problem It guided us in casting, in our selection of props the whole sound track was built around that very problem because there are few elements you hear on a boat They tend to get monotonous and it took a lot of time and hard work for everyone working on the sound track to overcome that problem – to make the sounds which are heard almost from the beginning to the end of the movie seem fresh I guess that was the biggest problem And with the cast there was the fear that, without perfect actors, people were going to get sick of seeing these people on the screen that they would long to cut away to the party scene or something, and of course we had no opportunity to cut away to anything

I think you succeed very well with that When you answered that last question you spoke about "we all did this", now, you've worked with the Kennedy Miller organization several times, on The Dismissal, The Cowra Breakout *What are your impressions of them as a team to work with? How much steps are you left as director?*

Basically much the same as for any other productions I've worked on I guess the difference is that in the writer, Terry Hayes, you also have a very skilled producer in your producer George Miller, you have the services and advice of a very skilled director to draw on, and to a degree that crossover of roles was different from most other projects I've worked on As a director it means there is a real cross fertilization of ideas For example, the whole film was storyboarded (and some people may say it looks like that!) I spent five months with Ty Bosco (who also drew up a lot of the storyboards for *The Cowra Breakout* with Chris Noonan and me) and we drew all the sequences George didn't participate in that process but Terry did Sometimes I would actually draw ahead of his scripting because he would be revising one draft and I would be drawing a sequence as yet unrevised Sometimes he would finish the scene in part based on the storyboard It worked the other way too As a writer who was also a producer, he was able to look at the drawings and see how I imagined the scene He commented on a couple of occasions that he didn't agree with this or that, this shot was too early or this information was revealed too late, things like that

Having worked closely with him for a long time, particularly on *The Cowra Breakout*, which was a long haul, I was in the position where I was able to trust his advice, and that is one of the problems directors often have with producers I was also able to listen to him, which is another problem we directors sometimes have with our co workers And I think that happened conversely too When it came to the casting, for example, all four of us, Doug Mitchell, George, Terry and I, spent hours going over all the possibilities and, independently, all arrived at the same conclusions about the three actors But I guess it's a case of leap-frogging off each other and that's a wonderful thing when it does happen, when you have a team of people who work together, who respect each other, who have a fair amount of proficiency in each of their areas, who are not afraid to speak up and are also not reluctant to compliment In the end, I hope we achieved something that none of us could have aspired to individually As a director, this collaboration is not something you feel hindered by, rather it's something you feel inspired by

I have read in other interviews that with Kennedy Miller there is a genuinely co-operative, collaborative spirit I think "comprehensivist" was the word George Miller himself used about the nature of the involvement of people

Yes, I agree, and that continues right up to this moment I have just been speaking to George and Doug, who were in a car somewhere here in Los Angeles, going through (as they had been for the last hour) all the plans for the promotion of the film in America That "comprehensivist" approach is certainly continuing right through until we get it on the screen

What are you actually doing in Hollywood now?

I'm dubbing (or mixing, as we call it in Australia) *Blind Fury*, a feature film I've just about completed for Tri-Star I guess everyone will say it is, like *Dead Calm*, a complete departure for me. It's an action comedy film starring Rutger Hauer and it's due for release in Australia around the same time as *Dead Calm* In the US it will open in late summer

I'd like now to go back and try to place Dead Calm *in the context of your work as a whole Your earlier films showed commitment, I would say, to a Leftish liberal mindedness which really seemed to be at the heart of their meaning Would you say that from this point of view* Dead Calm *constitutes a new direction? I don't mean you've suddenly become ferociously Rightist but that this is no longer a major concern to you in this film*

I'd have to agree with that It wasn't a major concern, no I mean, the earlier films were also characterized by a humanist approach to life and I hope that still comes through in this one

I suppose what I meant was that those others seemed to be concerned with private lives against a backdrop of public affairs

I agree with you I think there are two factors operating here one is the pleasure that I found in directing that second hour of *The Cowra Breakout* and the pleasure I found in watching the story myself after I had directed it The second one is a feeling – and this is what guided me in the choice of *Blind Fury*, the film I made after *Dead Calm* – you have as you get older that life is short, which is something I never thought about when I made *Bark Roads* or *Heatwave* or *Newsfront* It seemed then as though I would be alive forever

It is the feeling that you have only so many films in you there's a limit to them The realization that you're not Rainer Werner Fassbinder and you can't turn out four movies a year; that, based on the average, you'll be really lucky if you do one every two years, more likely one every three years, the realization that unless I stop smoking I'm really making a date for my death!

As a director, you spend a year or a year to two years on one project – it becomes your whole life You live with it, you wake up in the middle of the night with the thing coming out of your brain, you can't close it off, there's nothing you can do You're caught up with the characters, with the tensions that are running through the story you are working on, and I guess I reached the stage where I thought, "My God, I'm not going to keep on making the same sorts of films" That doesn't mean I won't return to old preoccupations, but I want to make some different sorts of films because I want to have different sorts of dreams! And I want to extend myself in different ways as a director as well Directing films is what I seem to do most of the time and with possibly the most vigour as well, so I wanted to have a more multi dimensional experience of life if that's what my life is going to be And the way to do that is to search for new stories, settings and genres

CONTINUING THE AQUATIC THEME? TWO FLOOD SCENES FROM NOYCE'S HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL 1979 FEATURE *NEWSFRONT*

I take it you mean that you wouldn't want the films you make to be constrained by your own ideological preoccupations You're not, for example, a Lindsay Anderson

Yes, that too

It's now 20 years since you began your career as a filmmaker with the short feature Better to Reign in Hell *and I wonder, if you look back on those years as director, writer, sometimes producer, what you would see as your continuing interest or preoccupation in your work Do you see, as you look back, any kind of continuing line right up to the present – either preoccupations with the medium itself, stylistic or thematic preoccupations? Or should that be left to critics?*

Lately I've been reading a lot of screenplays and thinking about whether I want to make any of them One of the things that I feel after several weeks

of reading is that I really want to make life affirming films, and I would hope that is something that runs through all of my work. I guess that having come up from the underground, as it were, having become interested in cinema through the work of the American so-called underground filmmakers like Stan Brakhage, as well as the Australian experimentalists of the late Sixties, I have been fascinated with the manipulation of filmic elements

Echoes of Paradise was an exception to that The film was made under extraordinary circumstances that forced the abandonment of anything I had originally intended to do with the film We were denied access to Indonesia, where the story was set and where we had been planning for five years to make the film Finally the overwhelming preoccupation on that film became, "Will we ever be able to finish it?" That film is different from any of my other projects because of the nightmarish circumstances of production But I guess a fascination with the manipulation of filmic elements runs through the others and that is probably still true in *Dead Calm*

I'm sure it is You said before that Newsfront *was a long time ago and you'd forgotten it I was hoping to draw you out about it a bit When I was publicizing a book of mine in 1987, several times I was asked if I had a favourite Australian film and I always said* Newsfront *How do you feel about it, 10 years on?*

Well, I saw the film quite recently at a retrospective at UCLA I meant I had forgotten the experience of making it, how difficult it was It's hard to say how I feel about it because all the people working on the film were a little overwhelmed by the reception it received

Why do you think people feel so affectionately about it? I've never known anyone who disliked it.

In Australia you mean? Possibly because it was able somehow to combine what turned out to be (although we didn't realize it when we were making the film) a fair amount of innovation – at least within the context of Australian cinema – with a reasonable degree of commercial success That's been relatively uncommon within our national cinema I think a major reason people like it is because of Bob Ellis's script, and I think that it may also be that while it describes an innocent age, it was made by innocent people as well When the film was made it was aimed purely and simply at the audience that we knew so well and at no one else anywhere in the world. We were only thinking as far as Parramatta, not worrying about what New Yorkers or Londoners would think So possibly for an Australia audience it touched a nerve because we were talking directly to them I don't know You're asking me to do the job of a critic!

I was wondering if you were going to go on to say anything about the interconnection of the public and private life I'm very fond of the film and that is what probably fascinates me most

There was something which I said in an interview before the film was made in 1977 and I think it probably still applies So many period films place a veil over the past in this film we sought to do that – to indulge the audience's sentimentality or their nostalgic yearning for an irretrievable era – but at the same time we tried to lift the veil off the past and reveal what happened back then, under a new spotlight, and ask people to reconsider We almost tried to use nostalgia as a device for revelation, and maybe that appeals particularly to Australians Something else which I think is very important is that, for all of us, the film came out at a particular time It was a time when we were still having a love affair with our cinema, which was very much a narcissistic love affair because we were in love with ourselves, with the mirror image of ourselves projected up there on the silver screen, in a place where previously we only saw Americans or, less frequently, the English or, even less frequently, Europeans In 1978, when the film came out, it was around the peak of that era when people were thrilled at the evocation of their culture by their indigenous cinema, and it's possible some people think of it with affection for that reason

In the 1980s you went on to do work on television, particularly mini-series like The Cowra Breakout *and* The Dismissal *I wanted to ask you about what sort of distinction you would see between working in television and working on a feature film. What are some of the differences you find? Do you have a preference? Are there advantages/disadvantages?*

It all boils down to the story Some stories are obviously better told – *The Dismissal* is one example – through the medium of television than they would be through the cinema We would not possibly have hoped to get people to leave their houses to see a dramatic representation of events that were like the sort of thing they could see on a current affairs program at home on television And yet so many people tuned in to see it on television It really depends on the project For instance, for a long time I have wanted to make a mini-series of the novel *Saigon*, which tells the story of three families – an American, a French and a Vietnamese – during the years 1925-1975 This was a project Matt Carroll was producing and I was going to direct it There is no way you could tell that story in the cinema and you would never reach the audience you wanted to reach anyway, even if you could You would have to truncate the story so much But the mini-series format is perfect – the longer the better

JUDY DAVIS AND RICHARD MOIR IN *HEATWAVE* (1982)

Obviously there are differences initially, and it can be a trap you fall into I certainly found the adjustment from television back into cinema on *Shadows of the Peacock* a little difficult, in terms of the breadth of shots that were now suddenly available to you Working in television was a very important transition for me in terms of the sorts of movies I went on to make afterwards

In television you constantly have to face up to the problem that you must engage your audience Some people would say this is a disadvantage because you might lose some of the esoteric preoccupations in your work, but I would see it as a distinct advantage With television there is always the possibility that people will turn off, so you always have to reach out of the screen and grab hold of them, make them sit down and become fascinated by the story you are telling Whereas in cinema, you can imagine that you are making the film for yourself because the audience are yours once they have come into the cinema The real problem is to get them out of their homes and into the cinema As you are making the story, however, you can sometimes forget that you have to keep them fixed into their seats just as much as you do in television, or that it can be advantageous to keep them as riveted I guess working in television in that regard provided a transition through to the kind of film *Dead Calm* is, for better or for worse

You have to create rhythms that will not let the audience off the hook, that will always keep them involved And in television you are forced to constantly consider every moment, every scene with that necessity as the basis of your approach to each scene of the story you are telling I have found myself able to carry what I've learned in television into *Dead Calm* as film

Well, I think that works I think one of the great successes of Dead Calm is simply the narrative grip that you get on the viewer, and this is not something I would say about a great many contemporary films Most of them seem to me to be a good half-hour too long It seems to be quite daring of you to have made the film run an hour and a half That is short by comparison with a lot of films these days, but was that a decision of yours?

Yes, it was a decision we made while we were cutting it We cut it to the length we imagined it would best play at We didn't jettison any substantial material, but the final process was arrived at by cutting a second here and a second there, 10 seconds somewhere else, until we felt that the rhythms would sustain the tensions that we were trying to set up

There is a nice sense of nothing wasted in it, which I thought might have been partly a result of what you were talking about in television, the sense of having to grab your audience and hold them there, because I think Dead Calm *works in this kind of way too. It does keep people glued to the screen wanting to know what will happen next, which is an old fashioned gift but not all that common!*

In 1985 you were planning to direct The Umbrella Woman, *which was in the event made by another director. Why did you not go on with that plan?*

I actually decided to direct *Saigon*, the mini series for Matt Carroll and Greg Coote, and it was a choice between the two projects. I had prepared *The Umbrella Woman* for many months back in 1982 or 1983, chosen the location and the actors, I had played the film over and over again with the writer, Peter Kenna, and the producer, at that time, Margaret Kelly. It almost felt like I had made the film – and I certainly had in my mind, many times! I could see it projected before me. But when the opportunity came to make *Saigon* the subject matter fascinated me; the task of making such a mammoth story about such epic events seized me, and so I embarked on that project, only to find that several months later it was cancelled by CBS which, along with Channel 9 in Sydney, was the network that had commissioned the project. We were never able to resurrect it. In the meantime the film changed producers and my friend and colleague Ken Cameron was appointed the director of *The Umbrella Woman*.

Finally, I wanted to ask you how you saw yourself as a director of actors. I ask this because Bill Hunter's performance in Newsfront *still seems to me one of the very best in any Australian film I know. Would you describe yourself as a director of actors? How much and what sort of direction to you give them?*

You'd have to ask the actors that one. I think the most important part of working with actors is the preparation. It's obviously important what you do on the set but you can't create a performance or assist an actor in his or her performance on the set. The performance is not created on the set, it is recorded on the set. The performance is created out of the characterization which is created by the actor (hopefully with the assistance of the director) well before shooting.

It varies from project to project, from relationship to relationship, but as a generalization I would say that my aim is to assist the actor to become the character before he or she steps onto the set: almost in the hope that, if the script had been written in invisible ink which had suddenly dried up and disappeared off the page, they could speak with voices, as if they were possessed (and obviously I'm exaggerating but only to make a point), because they knew everything there was to know about the person they were portraying – everything that was necessary within the context of the drama we were making. This involves workshops, research and a lot of seemingly peripheral preparation do to with characterization. Then I find that on the set so many of the choices that you make as director will be guided by the choices that the actor possessed by their character is able to offer you – what they do, where they stand, how they deliver a line and so on. On the set I see my principal role as encouraging rather than saying, "Do it like this" or "This is how it should be done." Nudging an actor towards the performance that he or she has found from preparation and natural strength as a performer and, of course, from the text itself. Nudging is a good word for it, I think.

PHIL NOYCE: SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

Better to Reign in Hell (1969 short) – writer, producer, director. *Style of Champions* (1970 documentary) – production assistant. *Intersection* (1970 short) – director. *Just a Little Note* (1970 short) – editor, DOP. *Camera Class* (1971 short) – director. *Homesickie* (1971 short) – actor. *Sun* (1971 short) – director. *Memories* (1971 short) – director. *Who Are These People and What Are These Films* (1972 documentary) – director. *Good Afternoon* (1972 two screen documentary) – producer, director. *One Hundred a Day* (1973 short) – production assistant. *Cuneyan Park* (1973 short) – writer, director. *That's Showbiz* (1973 short) – actor, writer, director. *Cinemania* (1973 documentary) – editor. *Castor and Pollux* (1974 documentary) – photography co editor, director. *Matchless* (1974 short) – production assistant. *I Happen to be a Girl* (1974 documentary) – DOP, editor. *Renegades* (1974 documentary) writer, producer, DOP, editor, director. *God Knows Why But It Works* (1975 short) – co-writer, director. *The Golden Cage* (1975 feature) – production manager, assistant director. *Funks Make Movies* (1975 documentary) – director. *Let the Balloon Go* (1976 feature) – second assistant director. *A Calendar of Dreamings* (1976 short) – editor. *Zuzem Zum* (1976 short) – production assistant. *Why Can't They Be Like We Were?* (1976-77 TV documentary series) – a director. *Backroads* (1977 feature) – co-writer, producer, director. *Newsfront* (1978 feature) – co writer, director. *Tulau Dewata* (1978 documentary) – writer, director. *Three Vietnamese Stories* (1980 documentary) – director. *Fact and Fiction* (1980 documentary) director. *Heatwave* (1982 feature) – co-writer, director. *Survival* (1983 documentary) director. *The Dismissal* (1983 mini series) – co writer, a director. *The Cowra Breakout* (1985 mini series) – co writer, a director. *The Hitchhiker* (1985 TV anthology series) – director of four short dramas. *Echoes of Paradise* (1987 feature) director. *The Hitchhiker* (1989 TV anthology series) – director of one short drama. *Blind Fury* (1989 feature) – director. *Dead Calm* (1989 feature) – director.

*Oja Kodar was Welles' longtime associate, rather than his widow.

AN INTERVIEW BY PAUL HARRIS

FRANCO NERO

ONE OF THE most sought after actors in film and television, Franco Nero describes himself as "a well preserved veteran and world traveller", as evidenced by a diverse range of international screen credits. They extend from spaghetti westerns to the Hollywood musical *Camelot*, and include major roles for directors of the stature of Fassbinder and Bunuel. His career also includes an involvement in production that extends back to his formative years in Parma, when he was partner in a small company that produced low-budget documentaries. His excellent English has ensured him a steady work load in international co-productions and this year saw him in Australia to play the lead role in a new television mini series, *The Magistrate*.

PAUL HARRIS *What were your initial reactions on reading the script of* The Magistrate?

FRANCO NERO: I accepted the offer because I enjoyed the script. It was not an easy decision to reach due to the fortunate fact that I am much in demand. So I was faced with the decision of moving away from my European home base. But I am a strange actor, maybe the only Italian who is constantly working abroad. I can speak different languages and have worked with people of many different nationalities. Most stories of the Mafia have focused on the crime connection between Italy and the USA. This is something new because of the Australian link.

You would seem to be in the privileged position of being able to carefully pick and choose roles rather than just accept any assignment

I like to change roles and take risks. If you are successful in one kind of role a danger exists of typecasting. As an actor you must make a choice in life – you can either be a good actor or a star. Sometimes it is possible to combine both. Personally I prefer the variety of changing all the time, making three or four films a year, working with various directors in different environments.

In the Sixties Clint Eastwood, with the Dollars trilogy, and myself with *Django* (1966) were the two most popular stars of westerns. When the Americans chose to buy the rights to a spaghetti western the choice was between *A Fistful Of Dollars (1964)* and *Django*. They went for Eastwood because he was an American. Subsequently I made three highly successful spaghetti westerns and accepted an offer to go to America to make *Camelot (1967)*. While I was shooting that film Eastwood arrived on the set one day and jokingly ribbed me about my being an Italian making it big in Hollywood while he was still grinding out westerns. I told him not to worry, that I would go back to Italy and he would advance his career. After all, it was his home town. Ironically, Josh Logan and Lerner and Loewe later offered me the leading role in *Paint Your Wagon*, which I declined. It was Clint Eastwood who took my place!

In some of your earliest screen roles you were credited as Frank Nero

John Huston, who directed *The Bible*, discovered me and taught me English. He also suggested to Josh Logan that I be cast in *Camelot*, so I owe that man a lot. The producer De Laurentiis wanted me to change my name, which is Francesco Spartanero, because he claimed that Americans would never be able to pronounce such a mouthful. He wanted to call me Castello Romano ("the Roman Castles") which was based on the area outside of Rome where film studios were located. Finally, as a compromise, I merely shortened my name.

ABOVE: WITH CATHERINE DENEUVE IN *TRISTANA* (1969); 'BUNUEL IS THE GREATEST DIRECTOR THAT EVER LIVED. ..HE SHOT EXACTLY WHAT HE NEEDED AND NEVER OVER-COVERED. HE WAS TIMING THE MOVIE AS HE WAS SHOOTING.' RIGHT: WITH JOANNA SHIMKUS IN *THE VIRGIN AND THE GYPSY* (1969); 'IN ONE LONDON CINEMA THE FILM RAN FOR 13 MONTHS.' BELOW: IN BELLOCCHIO'S *MARCIA TRIONFALE* (1975) OPPOSITE PAGE: ON THE SET OF *QUERELLE* (1982) WITH, AMONG OTHERS, ANDY WARHOL.

However, prior to *The Bible (1966)* I made a Western with Joseph Cotten and Jim Mitchum called *The Tramplers* (d Albert Band, 1966) which the producers wanted to promote as an American film, so thus I was billed as Frank Nero There was another one called *The Hired Killer* (d Franco Prosperi, 1966) with Robert Webber Paramount picked up the world rights but following the success of *Django*, my name quickly reverted from Frank to Franco During this period many Italians were Anglicizing their names behind English pseudonyms like E B Clucher (Enzo Barboni) and Terence Hill (Mario Girotti) but I refused to follow this trend

Were you interested in an acting career from an early age?

I was born in Parma and my family comes from the south – a village called Puglia. As a boy I was an active sportsman, playing soccer and participating in decathlons In my teenage years I began organizing and participating in student plays Parma is a culturally rich and diverse area Filmmakers like Bertolucci and Bellocchio came from this area, which also houses the oldest theatre in Europe, Teatro Farnese, and the oldest newspaper, *Gazzetta di Parma* There is also a school, Corale Verdi, named after the composer who also comes from this area

My fellow students teased me because of my ambitions and taunted me as a provincial dreamer So I went off to enrol at Milan University and spent a short, unhappy time at a leading theatre school I left after a month because I didn't like their teaching methods which threatened my sense of spontaneity I also organized a singing group called the Hurricanes which was based in Parma and performed at weekends

I finally arrived in Rome where I joined up with a group of friends, which included Vittorio Storaro and the Bazzoni brothers, to make documentaries We managed to gain steady work despite our impoverished circumstances At this point in time I was still unsure of my eventual vocation and worked various jobs on the crew including camera operator and lighting

At the age of 22 I decided to become a director, so I wrote a story and offered the result to a producer who laughed in my face when I told him of my aspirations Instead he offered me the lead role in a thriller called *The Third Eye* (d Mino Guerrini, 1966)

At the time you began working in the Italian industry it was going through one of its periodic upheavals, especially with the influx of American dollars during the Sixties

This is the reason I owe much of my success to Huston When *The Bible* was released an international media blitz took place with the press talking about Huston's major acting discovery I was working as a photographer's assistant in a painting studio when a photographer working for De Laurentiis visited one day and asked to take some photos of me

How difficult was it to suddenly adapt to the working methods employed by

I AM HAPPY ANYWHERE BECAUSE I AM A GYPSY... I HAVE A MIND FOR EASY ADAPTATION. I AM ACTUALLY VERY RELIGIOUS, VERY CATHOLIC... MY LIFE IS LIKE A MISSION...FOR 25 YEARS I HAVE SUPPORTED A VILLAGE OF 50 CHILDREN

the likes of major producers like De Laurentiis and Jack L. Warner?

The only time I became really upset was during the shoot of *Camelot* which lasted a year Millions of dollars were wasted while we stayed in Spain waiting for the leaves to change colour Several scenes were shot that were never used in the completed film So much unused material remained that Warner was keen to shoot a sequel concentrating on the Lancelot character I had a five–picture contract with Warner but I asked to be released after *Camelot* because I had become homesick

Because I was a foreigner based in the United States for a period longer than six months, it meant that I became eligible to be sent to Vietnam The law stated that I would be eligible for the call up This scared me greatly Vanessa and I had fallen in love too Following *Camelot* she flew back to London to work on *Isadora (1968)* and I was keen to work with my friends from the documentary company Another important reason for my departure was that I was too young and inexperienced to cope with the American mentality At the time I was regarded as the one of Hollywood's hottest properties but I felt that I was not ready for this kind of build up

How did you first become acquainted with Vanessa Redgrave?

When I started work on *Camelot* I had not met my co stars, Richard Harris or Vanessa Redgrave They arrived a few weeks later I was by myself in Los Angeles and working with a voice coach on my English One day on the lot Logan introduced me to a tall English actor, very tall, wearing blue jeans and glasses I greeted her in a cold manner because I was not impressed by her appearance Later I was invited to her house for dinner and witnessed a transformation in her appearance When I arrived at the door I thought that maybe I was at the wrong address So that was our first meeting!

What was your first film collaboration with Vanessa Redgrave in the Italian cinema?

A Quiet Place In The Country (1968), directed by Elio Petri for United Artists Following this we made two films with Tinto Brass (later to become infamous for *Caligula, 1979*) *Dropout* (1970) and *La Vacanza* (1971) Carlo Ponti had set up the production of *Dropout* but he disappeared on the eve of shooting We later found out he had lost interest when he could not persuade the American backers to give him two million dollars Our plan was to make the film cheaply for no more than half a million at most!

We decided to go ahead with the movie anyway, working in 16mm Both films are very original and innovative In *Dropout* I escape from a lunatic asylum, taking as a hostage a nice, bourgeois lady – a nurse In *La Vacanza* the plot is reversed with Vanessa playing the woman who takes a vacation from an asylum and meets a poacher in the forest

When I made *The Virgin And The Gypsy* (1969) I suspected that only a few friends would ever get to see the film – and I was wrong. Lawrence's story was simply told on the screen and there was a chemistry between myself as the gypsy vagabond and Joanna Shimkus In one London cinema the film ran for 13 months

I appeared in a Yugoslav-made epic of the partisan struggle against the Nazis called *The Battle Of Neretva* (1969) which was in production for nearly four years Actors from all over the world arrived to do their bits Curt Jurgens, Sergei Bondarchuk, Yul Brynner, Hardy Kruger, Orson Welles Although I knew Welles I didn't share any scenes with him but recently his widow, Oja Kodar, approached me about appearing in a film based on one of his unproduced scripts

The Mercenary (d Sergio Corbucci, 1968), a spaghetti western set during the Mexican Revolution, was originally set up to be directed by Gillo Pontecorvo (*The Battle Of Algiers, 1965*) and was written by one of the best Italian writers, Franco Solinas Pontecorvo, who is not the most prolific of directors, was fascinated by another Solinas screenplay, *Queimada! 1968* (*Burn!*) and eventually decided to make that instead with Brando The two main characters in the film, which was financed by United Artists, were the American mercenary and a Mexican. I had been signed to play the Mexican and James Coburn, at that time a box-office name through the Flint movies, was signed to play the American.

Eventually Coburn dropped out after a billing dispute and Corbucci asked me to play the American, suggesting that because of my accent that I should play the role as a Pole! But we still needed an actor to play the Mexican One day I went to see a movie thriller set on the New York subway called *The Incident* (d. Larry Peerce, 1967) and was impressed by a supporting actor named Tony Musante I suggested his name, he was hired and started a new career in Italian cinema working with the likes of Giuseppe Patroni Griffi and Dario Argento

It seems that the question of billing was highly political and subject to all kinds of disputation?

At that time actors would kill themselves about billing This was not such an important consideration to me What I decided to do was to share the billing, taking the top billing in the non English markets When I worked with Vanessa, William Holden, Anthony Quinn, etc they would take top billing in English speaking markets

How did you become involved with Luis Bunuel on Tristana?

Bunuel is the greatest director that ever lived He shot exactly what he needed and never over-covered He was timing the movie as he was shooting He refused to use music except in cases where it naturally occurred within the storyline He refused to call me Franco and would only address me as Nero because he hated Generalissimo Franco One morning on the set at Toledo he was very despondent because he had lost his bag He spent hours searching for the lost article which seemed to have a great importance to him When he finally retrieved it, his face lit up like a child By now I was curious to see the contents of this mysterious bag so while the crew was setting up the next set-up he retreated to a bench with the bag and I followed him out of curiosity Inside the bag was a small Coke bottle full of wine and a bread roll with ham in it He was sitting at the bench like a farmer quietly eating when I confronted him "Luis, what are you doing?" I asked "Please, don't tell anyone, I'm hungry," he replied, "don't tell anyone I'm eating We have to go on working but I don't want to set a bad example to the others "

He wrote a terrific script with Jean Claude Carriere called *The Monk* (1972) based on Ado Kyrou's erotic novel He really wanted to make this movie in Spain but ran into censorship problems He became so fed up that he gave the script as a present to Kyrou on the condition that he film the story with me in the lead role I can remember that he always slept on the floor, never on a mattress, because he believed it was good for the body

Bellocchio's Victory March *(1975) gave you ample opportunity to break away from your matinee-idol image with a basically unsympathetic portrayal of an authoritarian military captain*

I put that film together as an Italian French West German co-production after reading Bellocchio's script which I liked immediately I chose Michele Placido for the role of the young recruit whom I try to mould Miou Miou played my wife and the late Patrick Dewaere played an army reservist. At the same time I made a deal with the producer Silvio Clementelli to play in a film called *Scandalo* (aka *Submission*, d Salvatore Samperi 1977) in which I played a shopboy who is hidden by a pharmacist (Lisa Gastoni) during the war in France The film becomes a battle of wills between these two characters as they attempt to dominate each other Initially, she has the upper hand and treats him as a slave Eventually he turns the tables and becomes the dominant one

Do you feel that the contributions to Italian cinema of middle-ranking directors like Damiani, Corbucci, Squitieri, Vancini and Lizzani are critically undervalued?

It is a real shame ecause several years ago there were dozens of great directors, especially in the silent period when Italian films were widely shown around the world and were frequently copied by American directors. But now there are only a handful of names generally known to the film going public

I have worked with exciting, younger directors including Gianfranco Mingozzi, Salvatore Nocita and Beppe Cino, formerly an assistant to Rossellini. I have recently worked with Nocita on a mini series, *The Betrothed* (*I Promessi Sposi, 1988*), which was also made as a fondly remembered feature

film in the Forties by Camerini The new version is an elaborate $34 million international co-production with Burt Lancaster and F Murray Abraham

Elio Petri, who is now dead, received an Academy Award for *Investigation Of A Citizen Above Suspicion* (1970) but many of his other great films are unknown outside Italy Part of the problem is the American practice of importing culture from Europe, so, for example, Swedish cinema was for many years solely represented by the name of Ingmar Bergman, Spain by Bunuel, France by Truffaut, West Germany by Herzog and Fassbinder and so on The holy names in Italy remain the likes of Pasolini, Fellini, Antonioni and De Sica and these directors are stars who are primarily uninterested in actors Fellini uses actors as props in his spectacles, Antonioni is more concerned with the compositions within the frames, Pasolini was similar in that he picked people up off the streets But there is another tradition of directors who really enjoy working with actors and here I am thinking of Damiani, Squitieri, Vancini, Petri and Zampa These people deserve more recognition

You have worked on occasions with Robert Katz, the American writer based in Rome.

I put together the film version of Morris West's novel *The Salamander* in 1981 as a US-Italian British co-production The original script was fantastic but the backers thought it was too long so I suggested that Katz, being an Italian resident, might be an ideal choice to make script revisions I rounded up several acting friends Eli Wallach, Martin Balsam, Anthony Quinn, Claudia Cardinale The only problem was the director, Peter Zinner, who was making his feature debut He came to see me in Los Angeles one day and begged me to work on the project His credentials as an editor were very impressive and included fine work for Coppola, *The Godfather (1972)*, and Cimino, *The Deer Hunter (1978)* I made a mistake in hiring him

Everybody seems to think that directing is easy but you need a sense of culture, you need to spend years absorbing the working atmosphere of film sets, watching the mechanics and scenes being played out with the camera The first cut of *The Salamander* was over four hours and had to be cut down to two hours for cinema release I had to fly out to Los Angeles to record a voiceover narration to explain what were now incomprehensible plotpoints One of the producers I hired for that film was Paul Maslansky, who is now one of the richest producers in the world thanks to the *Police Academy* series which he initiated

What was your initial reaction to the script of Fassbinder's Querelle?

Fassbinder kept offering me movie roles in films like *Lili Marleen* (1981) which I couldn't fulfil because of scheduling problems So one day Katz calls and tells me that Fassbinder is acting in a movie, *Kamikaze '89* (d Wolf Gremm, 1982) as the leading man and he has asked if I would appear in a cameo role As payment he offered me the Italian rights I accepted, just for fun But the real reason the offer was made is that he likes to meet you personally and size you up At this time he had started casting *Querelle* and told me about that film When I read the script I was unsure but Fassbinder persisted in his shy manner Eventually I was won over and realized I had underestimated the man. He was a fan of my work and owned cassettes of many of my films During the shoot of *Querelle* I signed a personal contract with him for two further projects – *The Blue of Noon* by Georges Bataille and *Cocaine*

Querelle was a strange experience for me I remember Andy Warhol, who designed the film's poster, as a frequent visitor on set Every night Fassbinder would sit in the same spot in the same restaurant with his cohorts enclosed in his own world, always populated by the same 10 or 15 cronies He was incredibly fast in the shooting – the schedule stipulated an eight week shoot but he completed his task in four weeks and three days When you see the finished product it is quite unbelievable There were no rehearsals All he told me was that if I did something he didn't like then he would let me know But he didn't say anything As a person I thought he was a desperate man He was strong minded and a compulsive worker

Have you developed any properties yourself for the screen?

Ten years ago while Elio Petri was still alive we collaborated on a great script called *The Hostage*, set in America This was a project I dearly wanted to direct At this time Jessica Lange, who had recently completed *King Kong (1976)*, agreed to be involved However nobody wanted her She was trying to live down the ill fated *Kong* remake and her career went into a downslide until Bob Fosse gave her a part in *All That Jazz* (1979) Even then she had to audition with 200 other actresses

Another project dear to my heart was the story of three Italians in America, to be played by Marcello Mastroianni, Vittorio Gassman and myself All the major American companies expressed interest but the best offer was made by Alan Ladd Jr at Fox with whom we signed As producer I employed a friend of mine, Fernando Ghia, later to produce *The Mission (1986)* Unfortunately a clause in the contract gave Fox final script approval On Friday the film was green-lighted but by Monday had been scrapped due to the reaction of the executives' wives who read it over the weekend and pronounced it "against the American woman"

What happened to prevent your participation in Francesco Rosi's Uomini Contro *(1969)?*

Originally I was intending to make this film with Petri. At the same time Francesco Rosi was involved in a cat-accident and his daughter died A few days later Rosi called Petri and told him that he (Rosi) wanted to make this particular film Rosi went ahead and made the film with Mark Frechette, who had featured in *Zabriskie Point (1969)* The film bombed and the producer lost his investment.

In your CV do you have any favourite we have not mentioned?

In 1980 I made a film in Yugoslavia called *The Falcon*, directed by Vatroslav Mimica Set in the 16th century, the story concerns a national hero of that country who fights the Turks who have abducted his wife I became friends with Bondarchuk on the *Neretva* film and he asked me to play John Reed in the Russian epic of *Ten Days That Shook The World* which was filmed in two parts, one in Mexico, *Mexico In Flames* (1982), and the other in Russia, *Red Bells* (1982) I worked for Claude Chabrol in Tunisia on a paranormal thriller, *The Magicians (1976)*, with Stefania Sandrelli and Jean Rochefort Besides being a great director he is also a champion gourmet and chess player

You're a good chess player yourself, utilizing the world as your chessboard and working in various countries under differing circumstances

I am happy anywhere because I am a gypsy My grandmother was a Spanish gypsy so I have a mind for easy adaptation Because I have been involved in production myself I like to help out on sets and this is bad for actors who don't seem to want advice I am actually very religious, very Catholic – my life is like a mission because for 25 years I have supported a village of 50 children which I take care of I like to see what can be done to save money and help make technical improvements

On Zeffirelli's Young Toscanini *(1988) you received an unusual billing ..*

Zeffirelli approached me about playing Toscanini's father in his younger days The proposal was to film for three weeks in my home town of Parma so I accepted Months went by and meanwhile I was involved in two other projects, *The Betrothed* and *Pygmalione '88* (d Flavio Mogherini) One day I receive a phone call asking if I am still interested in playing in the Toscanini film which has been shooting for months So what he offered was one day's work in Tunisia where sets representing the Genoa harbour and the theatre house had been constructed I agreed to do the two scenes they required but didn't want any billing and made the stipulation that my fee be forwarded to the village where my 50 children live Zeffirelli pleaded with me to allow my name to be used but I explained to him that my role didn't even amount to a cameo so we decided to call it "a friendly appearance"

Finally, what happened with your starring appearance in Victor/Victoria?

Sad story Blake Edwards intended using me in that film when the project was with Lorimar When MGM inherited the film the studio head, David Begelman, quarrelled with Blake about Julie being involved Finally, as a face-saving compromise, Begelman did some horse trading and allowed Edwards to cast his wife if Begelman was allowed to have a say in the other casting So he "suggested" his good friend, James Garner ■

FRANCO NERO: SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

1963 *Un Delitto* (documentary) (d Luigi Bazzoni) 1964 *La Celestina* (*Calistina/Made in Your Service*) (d Carlo Lizzani) *Le Kapitaine in Prestito* (d Alfredo Giannetti) 1965 *Io lo conosco bene* (*I Know Her Well*) (d Antonio Pietrangeli) *I Criminali della galassia* (*The Wild, Wild Planet/War of the Planets*) (d Antonio Margheriti) *I dialfonsi vengono da morte* (*The Deadly Deaphonds*) (d Antonio Margheriti) *Gli uomini dal passo pesante* (*The Trespassers*) (d. Albert Band/Mario Sequi) 1966 *The Bible* (d. John Huston) *Djange* (d. Sergio Corbucci) *Il terzo occhio* (*The Third Eye*) (d James Warren [Mario Guerrini]) *Tecnica di un omicidio* (*Take Hired Killer/No Tears for a Killer*) (d Frank Shannon [Franco Prosperi]) *Le cose contro la morte e fin tempo di innocenza* (*Tempo di massacro/The Brute and the Beast*) (d Lucio Fulci) *Tenta addio* (*The Avenger*) (d Ferdinando Baldi) 1967 *Camelot* (d Joshua Logan) *L'uomo, Purgatorio in vendetta* (d Luigi Bazzoni) 1968 *Il Mercenario* (*The Mercenary/A Professional Gun*) (d. Sergio Corbucci) *Un tranquillo posto in campagna* (*A Quiet Place in the Country*) (d Elio Petri) *Il giorno della civetta* (*Mafia/The Day of the Owl*) (d Damiano Damiani) 1968 *The Battle of Neretva* (d Veljko Bulajic) 1969 *The Virgin and the Gipsy* (d. Christopher Miles) *Gott mit uns* (*God Among Us/Crime of Defeat*) (d Giuliano Montaldo) *Tristana* (d Luis Bunuel) *Un detective macchia di sangue* (*Detective Belli*) (d Romolo Guerrieri) 1970 *Drupina* (d Tinto Brass) *Vivere in pace, compagnero* (*Compagneros*) (d Sergio Corbucci) 1971 *Giornata nero per Ariete* (*Evil Fingers*) (d Luigi Bazzoni) *Confessione di un commissario di polizia al Procuratore della Repubblica* (*Confessions of a Police Captain*) (d Damiano Damiani) *La Vacanza* (d Tinto Brass) 1972 *Pope Joan* (*The Devil's Imposter*) (d Michael Andersen) *L'istruttoria è chiusa dimenticate* (d Damiano Damiani) *Non si muoia tutti* (*Don't Turn the Other Cheek/Long Live Your Death*) (d Duccio Tessari) *Le Mani* (*Il Mano ca/The Mark*) (d Aldo Lyrusi) *Il delitto Matteotti* (d Florestano Vancini) *Senza ragioni* (*Redneck*) (d Silvio Narizzano) 1973 *Lo Amigos* (*Deaf Smith and Johnny Ear*) (d. Paolo Cavara) *Zanna Bianca* (*White Fang*) (d Lucio Fulci) *Lo poliziotto sta crimine in legge violent* (*High Crime*) (d. Enzo Castellari) 1974 *Legittimi* (*Blood Brothers*) (d Pasquale Squitieri) *Il ritorno di Zanna Bianca* (*Challenge to White Fang*) (d Lucio Fulci) *Mandamus, ultimo atto* (*Mandamus, The Last Act*) (d Carlo Lizzani) *Il tutto deve ribellin* (*The Citizen Rebel*) (d. Enzo Castellari) 1975 *Perché uccidere un magistrato* (*Why Dare Our Kill a Magistrate?*) (d Damiano Damiani) *Corruzione al palazzo di giustizia* (*Corruption in the Halls of Justice*) (d Marcello Aliprandi) *Il poliziotto* (*Cipolla Colt/Cry On us/Smell of Onions*) (d. Enzo Castellari) *Cento di reggette* (*The Flower in his Mouth/Respectable People*) (d Luigi Zampa) *The Legend of Valentino* (TV movie) (d Melville Shavelson) *Marcia Trionfale* (*Victory March*) (d Marco Bellocchio) *Le Magnificenze* (*Profane per un delitto*) (d Claude Chabrol) 1976 *Antonio rosso sangue* (*Dio lo Dirà*) (d Pasquale Festa Campanile) *Keoma* (*The Violent Breed*) (d. Enzo G Castellari) *21 Hours to Munich* (TV movie) (d. William A. Graham) 1977 *Salomone* (*Scandalo*) (d Salvatore Samperi) *Django: il grande ritorno* (*Django's Great Return*) (d Enzo Castellari) 1978 *Force 10 from Navarone* (d. Guy Hamilton) *Harold Robbins' The Pirate* (mini series) (d Ken Annakin) 1979 *The Visitor* (d Giulio Paradisi) *The Man with Bogart's Face* (d Robert Day) *Un dramma borghese* (Mimi) (d. Florestano Vancini) *Shark Hunter* (d Enzo Castellari) 1980 *The Falcon* (d Vatroslav Mimica) *The Day of the Cobra* (d Enzo Castellari) *The Blue Eyed Bandit* (d Alfredo Giannetti) *Dancing Roses* (*The Roses of Danzig*) (d Alberto Bevilacqua) 1981 *Sabato Cruz* (d Tomino Valeri) *The Salamander* (d Peter Zinner) *Enter the Ninja* (d Menahem Golan) 1982 *Grog* (d. Francesco Laudadio) *Querelle* (d R.W Fassbinder) *Mexico in Flames* (d Sergei Bondarchuk) *Red Bells* (d Sergei Bondarchuk) 1983 *Wagner* (mini series) (d Tony Palmer) *The Wizard of Babylon* (documentary) (d Dieter Schidor) *Kamikaze '89* (d Wolf Gremm) 1984 *The Last Days of Pompeii* (mini series) (d Peter Hunt) *Un soldato a mezza* (d Tommaso Dazzi) 1985 *Street Country* (d Michael Cacoyannis) *Die Fortsetzung* (*The Forester's Sons*) (d Peter Patzak) *Garibaldi the General* (mini series) (d Luigi Magni) *Il pentito* (*The Repeater*) (d Pasquale Squitieri) 1986 *Race to Danger* (d. Tommaso Dazzi) *The Girl* (d. Arne Mattsen) *Marathon* (d. Terence Young) *Murderers Feelings* (d Mai Zetterling) 1987 *Il grande ritorno di Django* (*Django Rides Again*) (d Ted Archer [Nello Rosso]) *Un Amore per la Madre* (*An Affair for a Murder*) (d Edith Brunck) *Blue Blood* (d Sidney Havers) 1988 *Top Line* (d Ted Archer [Nello Rosso]) *The Betrothed* (mini series) (d. Salvatore Nocita) *Sidney Sheldon's Windmills of the Gods* (mini-series) (d Lee Philips) *Pygmalione '88* (d Flavio Mogherini) *Silent Night* (d Monica Teuber) *The Heart of Victory* (d. Ludovico Gasparini) 1989 *The Magistrate* (mini-series) (d Karlh Mueller) *Young Toscanini* (d Franco Zeffirelli)

REPORT BY JOHN NICOLL

The Agony and the FFC

AS THE TAXATION FILM FINANCE SCHEME "10BA" SLOWLY SANK TO A WATERY GRAVE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE HARBOUR, THE FILM INDUSTRY WENT THROUGH A MAJOR CRISIS CONCERNING ITS FUTURE OPTIONS. FROM DISCUSSIONS, FROM SPECIAL "WHITE PAPERS", FROM SUBMISSIONS, AND PRESUMABLY FROM ONE OR TWO LONG LUNCHES, EMERGED THE BLUEPRINT FOR A NEW FILM ASSISTANCE BODY. ENTER THE BRIGHT AND SHINING NEW KID ON THE BLOCK, THE FILM FINANCE CORPORATION, A BODY THAT HAS SOME $7D MILLION TO PLAY WITH THIS FINANCIAL YEAR AND IS BEING RUN ON "COMMERCIAL" GUIDELINES. BUT WHEN IS COMMERCIAL REALLY COMMERCIAL? AND WHAT DO THE LEADING PLAYERS THINK?

AS AN INDUSTRY PUNDIT remarked recently, the new Film Finance Corporation looks more like a pension trust fund at first glance Instead of executives, we have investment managers – and most of these managers are from the finance industry The Board of the FFC comprises people who generally have little "hard-nosed" producing experience but a considerable legal and financial background For the peak film body whose decisions will have considerable impact on the nature and viability of much of our insecure film and television industry, this may seem a surprising choice

Looking back, however, it is not hard to see why the FFC has gone in this direction A year ago the Australian film and television industry was in a panic The 10BA taxation scheme that had overseen record production levels only a few years earlier had been weakened by the government to a level that made investment in other specialized tax shelters more attractive to the speculative investor

This running down of 10BA was hardly accidental The government had set up the scheme to provide a cashflow into a still fledgling industry It had become an embarrassment and a nightmare The amount of tax money seeking shelter was far beyond original government estimates, and there was no control over where the money was going and what films were being made

10BA was basically a tax shelter driven system There was little need for concern about what would happen to 10BA films once the applause had died away at the "fine cut" screening Under the initial scheme of 150 50, a film often only needed around 15 per cent of advances in either pre sales or distribution guarantees to ensure that the investor would at least break even

What grew out of that was an industry that did not reflect world market place realities or even domestic audience needs As the government gradually tightened up10BA concessions the inevitable shake out occurred and has continued to occur So when consultation on an alternative to 10BA began, control of government money must have been uppermost in the minds of the planners.

And control is certainly what the FFC provides Although most producers left in the industry are positive about the replacement for 10BA, some think that the system need not have been abandoned but just re jigged Ian Bradley, chief executive of Crawfords Australia, one of the big three television producers in Australia, believes that 10BA could have been re worked "The sort of safeguards the FFC are demanding for investment business from them could have been demanded under 10BA And we wouldn't have needed a new bureaucracy "

Nevertheless, the FFC has arrived and is here for at least three more years Under current plans the FFC will spend around $70 million by the end of this financial year, with $75 million in 1989 90, $61 million in 1990 91 and $63 million in 1991 92 The funding shortfalls are expected to be made up of returns from previous investments

These returns explain why the FFC has been formulated along such commercial guidelines It is required to generate returns from its investment in the order of 50 per cent, and the preliminary reaction from producers seeking FFC funds at this early stage is that they are having to look long and hard at the "back end" of deal making to ensure that their films earn well, and do have a place in the market

Under 10BA there were few incentives for the producer to retain a great deal of equity in the project Most 10BA projects were made for the overhead recovery and the production turnover, whereas FFC-backed projects will certainly be working for market earnings

Paul Barron of Barron Films, which is known for quality productions like *Shame* and *Tudawali*, gained an FFC approval in March for *Haydaze*, a 12 part half hour children's series which has been pre sold to the Ten Network "We think it's great," he says of the FFC "In our experience working with the FFC was complicated and time consuming, and it would be easier if you had a checklist that you had to go through from day one But if I walked through the door and was dealing with a major bank or investor we would have expected the same response Nothing that was ever suggested or asked for was unreasonable "

Don McLennan, director of *Mullaway*, which has just been released nationally (under the title *Mull*), has also been a successful applicant to FFC "We went to them in February with the film *Breakaway* but were rejected We were asked to re apply in March, went back, addressed the issues they were concerned about and approval followed in March Basically those details were mechanical ones and we were delighted with the outcome "

McLennan, who will co-produce with Jane Ballantyne as well as direct, agrees that there is a lot more pressure on producers now "To get the level of pre-sales that you need to make it work you really have to look very hard at the back end of the deal There's probably more pressure than there was there under 10BA "

Al Clark, head of production at the Beyond International Group, is producer of *The Crossing*, one of the first features to gain FFC approval He is unable to talk much about the deal that he struck with the FFC, owing to further deal negotiations "But the one indisputable thing is for a country to have a $70 million fund which is unknown elsewhere This has to be acknowledged "

The first recipient of FFC approval was Crawfords, with the mini-series *All the Rivers Run II* The decision was received with scepticism in some parts of

PAUL BARRON PRODUCER: "IN OUR EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH THE FFC WAS COMPLICATED AND TIME-CONSUMING AND IT WOULD BE EASIER IF YOU HAD A CHEQUEBUST THAT YOU HAD TO GO THROUGH FROM DAY ONE. BUT IF I WAS DEALING WITH A MAJOR BANK OR INVESTOR WE WOULD HAVE EXPECTED THE SAME RESPONSE. NOTHING THAT WAS ASKED FOR WAS UNREASONABLE."

the industry, because of concern that the FFC was going to favour the larger, more sophisticated players. These comments seem to have evaporated somewhat although one smaller independent producer commented recently that the FFC was really only for "big boys" and Glenys Rowe, producer of *Dogs in Space* as well as David Caesar's documentary *Body Work*, believes that the FFC was slightly high-handed and regarded itself as only dealing with the "real players" in the game.

But Crawfords chief executive Ian Bradley sees the FFC as being of only marginal use to the large Melbourne based producer. "Certainly it's useful for us, we're very happy that it's there. But quite clearly in our opinion the FFC financed product has to be very much a minority of our production. It seems to me that it will be a lot more useful to the small independent producer. We have to keep a very large equity holding in our production, so we would always be looking at the FFC as a minority investor, and then because it has fairly stringent guidelines you're looking at 'Is it worth taking on a minority investor who has such stringent guidelines that it makes the mechanics of filmmaking much more complex?' We don't make money out of making shows, we make money out of selling shows. There's no point in us having a lot of shows we're selling all around the world if somebody else is getting the revenue from it."

When one talks to the FFC one certainly gets the impression that it is playing by the rules in making rigorously commercial judgements. These rules ask for certification, which means that, as with 10BA, a separate department of the government has to certify that the proposed production is Australian. Once that approval has been gained then the FFC's guidelines specify that generally projects must have levels of 30 per cent private participation to receive FFC assistance.

They do not demand that level of participation from all films however. Under the guidelines it is required to have an overall level of 30 per cent private investment across the whole production slate, which gives it the flexibility to fund things that might fall above or below that level. Every project is treated on an individual basis, and by late March some 57 applications had been received, not including those that have been re presented. There are also other exceptions to the rules, particularly documentaries and children's series.

It all seems flexible and worthy, but when one looks down the list of approvals to date, one immediately notices that the productions are predominantly television oriented. Out of 24 approvals to date totalling an investment of more than $32 million, there are six fictional mini series, four documentary series, six one off documentaries but only six feature films (including an animated feature from Yoram Gross, and an investment in a North American print and ad campaign for a McElroy and McElroy feature). Ross Dimsey, head of the Screen Production Association of Australia, comments, "Feature films are going to become the poorer cousins of television. Television is much favoured by the FFC arrangement which is probably as it should be. The television market in the world is growing enormously, the cinema market is not."

The FFC aims for 45-55 per cent of its annual production slate to be in the feature area. Why only six feature films out of 24 projects so far? The market itself provides one of the answers. Feature films are the high risk sector of the film and television industry, and basically the market for Australian films is limited. Getting feature films to the production stage is a very difficult task at present. But the FFC, by its own guidelines, has a crucial responsibility here and should be of most assistance. At the time of writing, its inroads into this area have been limited, but it is safe to say that by 30 June there will have been substantially more approvals of feature films, according to David Pollard, Chief Executive Officer of the FFC.

Pollard is pleased with the FFC's progress. "I am confident that the FFC will be 'on target' with its feature allocations of 50 per cent." Again, despite general industry concerns that the FFC will just not have time to make its complete allocation, he is also confident "that the general allocation of $70 million will be committed by the end of the financial year." He would not be led into a discussion of why the feature approvals were relatively low at this stage.

The explanation perhaps lies in the complexities of feature film funding. Producer and director Don McLennan says "To put a deal together that is really going to work you've got to be looking for an advance of around 50 per cent. On a small picture, say $3 million dollars, you are talking about $1.5 million and unless you have a very substantial name actor like Bryan Brown it would be very hard to find more than that. Under $3 million you're OK."

But unlike 10BA, it's not just a matter of getting the pre-sale which would then attract investors who had no further interest in the film, as the pre-sale guaranteed them a break even point in their tax deductible investment.

As the FFC is an investor, it wants to see some of its money back. So naturally it looks closely at what it will get from its investment. The first trap for players is this: if you sell off rights via pre-sales in many territories to get an advance of 50 per cent, then come to the FFC for the other 50%, it is then going to look very closely at what it can expect to recoup. If the product has already been pre-sold in most major territories and the FFC's 50 per cent is not going to get much return, then it is unlikely that it will enter into negotiations with a producer.

What it comes down to, says McLennan, is "How much of the picture can you pre-sell in foreign or local territories whilst leaving yourself enough territories to recoup whatever the FFC put up?" He believes that this will favour smaller budgeted features, and many producers agree. Pollard adds that along the lines of sensible commercial practice it is felt that the FFC should invest less the higher the budget is.

If the balance between pre-selling and leaving enough room for FFC returns is so critical, then the next point of contention becomes the way that returns are split between investors. That is, should private investors recoup their investment before the FFC recoups, or will the FFC insist on pro rata and pari passu (proportionally and simultaneously) rights of return. This has become a crucial issue, and even though the interim guidelines say that the recoupment position may be subordinated to private investors it is unclear to what extent this will be carried out.

David Pollard says, "Generally we have subordinated our interests to those of private investors." He would not be more specific than that, but what it indicates is that the so called hard commercial guidelines are maybe not so hard after all, as the FFC may well be willing to let other investors receive their returns, or at least some of their returns, before it does.

How they will decide the extent of that subordination and the acceptable minimum level of private participation in each project is the $64,000 question. Pollard again will not be drawn on any discussion of aesthetic judgements, but sees three main areas as crucial to assessments. First, whether

IAN BRADLEY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE CRAWFORDS AUSTRALIA: "MY GREAT FEAR IS THAT THE INDUSTRY NEEDS AN INCENTIVE TO TAKE RISKS AND WHILST THE FFC IS PUTTING UP RISK CAPITAL IT IS WORKING ON SUCH NARROW COMMERCIAL LINES THAT THERE IS A TENDENCY TO GO TO IT ONLY WITH THE SAFE COMMERCIAL PROJECTS. BUT ONE WONDERS NOW WHERE IS THE PLACE FOR THE EXPERIMENT?"

The Agony and the FFC

the market itself has demonstrated substantial interest through pre-sales, advances, etc, secondly, the quality of the producer's track record, finally, the marketing plans of the producer

All these 'hard' guidelines sound fine in theory, but there is no doubt that within those latter two areas in particular there is plenty of room for subjective judgement For example, when assessing "track record" does one merely look at the commercial success of a producer's past projects or does one take less tangible factors into account such as the cultural value of a film producer's record? How does one assess marketing plans in a market that is unpredictable and volatile?

Pollard will not be drawn on this line of questioning. "We have rules and we follow them," is his answer to suggestions that more subjective assessments must come into play when exercising "commercial judgement"

The problem then becomes how does an institution with limited film experience make these judgements? The FFC says that it will call in consultants if necessary One prominent producer says that an investment advisor had rung her and asked her to make an off-the-cuff assessment of the marketability of another producer's proposal She did not respond too kindly to what she regarded as an "amateurish" approach, and complained She received an apology from the FFC the next day and a promise that it would not happen again An isolated incident perhaps, but one that is not calculated to create confidence in the FFC's assessment procedure among producers

In general, producers express a cautious gratitude for the existence of the FFC, but the overriding concern is that the FFC will play it too safe with its insistence on so called rigid commercial guidelines "My great fear," says Ian Bradley, "is that the industry needs an incentive to take risks and whilst the FFC is putting up risk capital it is working on such narrow commercial lines that there is a tendency to go to it only with the safe commercial projects It does force a lot of producers into the commercial reality of the world, and after 10RA a certain amount of that was very desirable But one wonders now, where is the place for the experiment?"

Ben Lewin, director of such acclaimed series as *The Dunera Boys* and also of the forthcoming feature *Georgia*, starring Judy Davis, is tougher still with his criticism, although he prefaces it by saying no one knows a great deal about the FFC as yet "No one wants the industry to go bust in the next two minutes, and so we have guidelines I have no problems with the FFC's guidelines as long as it does not use them to insulate itself from having to make dynamic judgements of its own For example I can see no reason why, if a cracking good project comes along, the FFC should not be the first investor off the blocks The danger is though, that the FFC may regard crucial and original judgement as the responsibility of all the *other* Australian producers

"I say 'other' producers because I doubt if the FFC would accept the description for itself However if one's sole job in life is to spend many millions of dollars on effective screen entertainment, then it is a matter of semantics if one decides to call oneself something else The FFC has the opportunity to function at the real centre of the action I am concerned that, so far, it has refrained from saying that is what it intends to do"

Bryce Menzies, executive producer of *Malcolm* and the forthcoming *Celia*, is optimistic that the FFC will be supportive for lower budget, "interesting" films "I am sure that the FFC would love another project like *Celia* or *Malcolm* to come through its doors I think the FFC is cognizant of the fact that it hasn't funded that many feature films as yet I also think it is cognizant of the fact that successful feature films, either creatively or commercially, are going to 'score' more points for it than mini series In the end the FFC reflects the industry If it's going to be television oriented then we deserve it because we haven't got out there and done it We will get the film industry that we deserve"

BEN LEWIN, WRITER/DIRECTOR: "I HAVE NO PROBLEMS WITH THE FFC'S GUIDELINES AS LONG AS IT DOES NOT USE THEM TO INSULATE ITSELF FROM HAVING TO MAKE DYNAMIC JUDGEMENTS OF ITS OWN... THE FFC HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO FUNCTION AT THE REAL CENTRE OF THE ACTION I AM CONCERNED THAT SO FAR, IT HAS REFRAINED FROM SAYING THAT IS WHAT IT INTENDS TO DO"

At the moment, it is hard to say whether we will get our just deserts, and what role the FFC will play in the process It has only been in operation for a matter of months, and producers tend to err on the side of caution when they discuss its pros and cons Undoubtedly, some of the projects that receive FFC funding would have been made without its support, particularly in television In the feature area there is a feeling that its guidelines will favour the safe, "commercial" films it is still too early to tell exactly what the FFC means by that, and far too early to tell whether it was right ■

AUSTRALIAN FILM FINANCE CORPORATION PTY LTD (FFC)

THE BOARD

KIM WILLIAMS, CHAIRMAN Chief Executive, Southern Star Entertainment. Former Chief Executive, Australian Film Commission KENNETH ALLEN Investment Banker Chairman and Managing Director, Shearson Lehman Hutton. DR PATRICIA EDGAR AM Director, Australian Children's Television Foundation WILLIAM GURRY Managing Director, National Mutual Royal Bank; Barrister and solicitor ANTHONY HARTNELL Corporate Lawyer GABRIELLE KELLY Writer, director, producer of documentaries and children's television CHRISTOPHER LOVELL Lawyer JAMES SPIGELMAN QC, Barrister JACK THOMPSON AM Actor.

BOARD MEETINGS 1989

The board meets monthly to consider funding proposals. Projects are submitted after assessment by an investment manager, a process that takes approximately eight weeks. The following dates are scheduled Board Meetings for 1989 10 May – Sydney; 7 June – Melbourne; 5 July – Sydney; 2 August – Sydney; 6 September – Sydney; 4 October – Melbourne; 1 November Sydney; and 6 December – Sydney.

FUNDING DECISIONS 1988 89 (up to March 1989)

1 *All the Rivers Run II* Two x 2 hour mini series. Crawfords Australia.
2. *Pugwall*. Eight x one hour children's mini series LJ Productions
3 *Kaboodle II* Six x 25 minute animated series Australian Children's Television Foundation.
4. *Round the Twist*. 13 x 30 minute children's series Australian Children's Television Foundation
5 *The Great Taxi Adventure*. 54 minute documentary Michael Dillon Film Enterprises.
6. *Cassidy*. Four x 50 minute mini series ABC/Archive Films
7 *Beneath Indian Skies*. Three x 50 min documentary series Mediacast.
8 *Beyond El Rocco*. Five-part documentary series Kevin Lucas
9. *Overseas and Undersold, Australia Going Global*. Six x 30 minute documentary series David Flatman Productions
11 *Paradise for Sale* Documentary Tom Zubrycki
12. *Tidikawa Revisited*. One hour documentary Look Films.
13. *The Crossing* Feature. Beyond International Group
14 *Cinderella's Secret* (working title) Animated feature. Yoram Gross Studios
15 *Flair* Four-part mini-series Paul Davies Productions
16 *The Delinquents* Feature. Silver Lining Productions/Village Roadshow
17 *Tell There Was You*. Feature McElroy & McElroy
18 *Breakaway* Feature. Breakaway Films Pty Ltd.
19 *Haydaze* Twelve x 30 minute children's series Barron Films.
20 *The Social Climbers*. Documentary Dick Dennison
21 *The Kula Ring* Documentary Sky Visuals
22 *Visionaries 3* One hour documentary Julian Russell and Tony Gailey
23 *Visionaries 4*. One hour documentary Julian Russell and Tony Gailey
24 *Innovators in Australian Arts and Music*. Six one hour documentary series. Don Featherstone Productions

THE STATE OF PLAY IN PAY TV

PAY TV – A USER-PAYS SYSTEM WHERE VIEWERS BECOME SUBSCRIBERS – IS ALREADY A REALITY IN THE US. THERE ARE MOVES TO INTRODUCE THE SERVICE HERE, BUT WHO IS REALLY GOING TO BENEFIT?

THE INTERNATIONAL FILM AND TV INDUSTRY is set for a bonanza should the Australian government decide later this year to open up the market to new TV services funded by direct viewer payments. If the most popular pay menus in North America are any guide, the first package of services will target movie buffs, sports fans, news junkies and, possibly music devotees, by offering exclusive access to more of the type of programming already seen on free TV. Premium movies are generally regarded as the driving force behind pay TV. Home Box Office, the most successful US channel, runs a movie service that can gobble up some 340 titles a year, assuming each title is repeated seven times a month and several fresh releases are added each week. This service also requires extensive marketing: in a given month about four per cent of HBO subscribers disconnect, and over a year, about 50 per cent. Pay TV is quite a different business from free TV.

Obviously there is no way the Australian production industry could ever satisfy the voracious demands of a pay TV channel. It may benefit from a supplementary pay TV 'window' for premium movies or even an Australian pay movie quota. However, the paucity of a pay channel to support Australian producers is limited, as always, by the size of the market. HBO's subscriber base in 1988 was 16.5 million homes, compared with a total Australian base of 5.1 million homes. The industry will inevitably be forced to seek production partners overseas, and co-production, by definition, means some level of editorial and cultural compromise. In other words, Australian pay movies will be produced according to international financial requirements.

The major beneficiaries of a pay movie service will be the US film and television industry which services a domestic market (88.6 million TV homes) large enough to finance its own production costs. The proposed merger of Time Inc. and Warner Communications demonstrates the direction in which the US industry is heading. Time owns the two major US pay movie services, Home Box Office and Cinemax, while Warner offers a US film studio and an attractive stream of TV programs through Lorimar Telepictures. Additionally, both Time and Warner own local cable systems through which the pay movie services are delivered. Rupert Murdoch's media empire almost pales into insignificance when this merger is considered.

US program suppliers will obviously be eager to cash in on any Australian expansion, especially the giant studio companies seeking sales for their feature film libraries. Australia has earned a dubious reputation as one of the most lucrative markets in the world for US product. In the last 12 to 18 months, the commercial network owners have signed program output deals with almost all the major studios on very attractive terms for Hollywood. Indeed, one estimate suggests that they effectively doubled their prices.

AUSTRALIA HAS EARNED A DUBIOUS REPUTATION AS ONE OF THE MOST LUCRATIVE MARKETS IN THE WORLD FOR US PRODUCT. IN THE LAST 12 TO 18 MONTHS, THE COMMERCIAL NETWORK OWNERS HAVE SIGNED PROGRAM OUTPUT DEALS WITH ALMOST ALL THE MAJOR STUDIOS ON VERY ATTRACTIVE TERMS FOR HOLLYWOOD. INDEED, ONE ESTIMATE SUGGESTS THAT THEY EFFECTIVELY DOUBLED THEIR PRICES.

Some of these deals and alliances, no doubt, were designed to stave off pay competitors, since new sources of competition among Australian buyers could produced another sharp increase in prices. A pay operator, for instance, could trigger the networks into offering more to keep a movie away from pay TV. Another hurdle for the networks is the length of the viewing 'window' between pay and free-to-air TV, although there are signs this is breaking down in the US. A recent deal saw Murdoch's Fox network secure free TV rights to a program produced by an independent only 30 days after its exposure on pay TV. This makes a makes a mockery of pay TV's major selling point – that subscribers pay for the right to watch exclusive programs or, at the least, the right to watch programs well in advance of free-to-air viewers.

Hollywood is already reaping the benefits from new TV services in Europe, a fact made evident at the end of last year with the signing of several UK film deals worth more than $1 billion. The major purchasers were none other than Murdoch's Sky Television (in alliance with Disney) and British Satellite Broadcasting (BSB) in which Alan Bond has the largest stake. Later this year these two satellite operators plan to offer Britain's 20.6 million TV households another 11 channels. Their pay movie channels services are expected to be the major battleground.

Until recently, Britain's production industry has managed to maintain its editorial and cultural integrity though the imposition of foreign program quotas and the protection afforded to the BBC and independent TV stations. The Thatcher government has now announced plans for new terrestrial TV services which, combined with the entry of satellite services, must eventually fragment the UK domestic market. More British producers will then be forced to join their Australian colleagues in the search for co-production finance.

The introduction of new services in New Zealand should prove an interesting lesson for Australia. Sky Network, the first pay operator, is promising subscribers a three channel package for $10 a week. The channels will carry some advertising and will be delivered over the air via UHF in a scrambled (encoded) form. Only those who have leased a special Sky Network decoder will be able to receive them.

Sky News will draw heavily on the 24-hour US Cable News Network, Sky Sports will draw on the US Entertainment and Sports Network and Bond Media, and Sky Light will offer five movies a week from major overseas film studios. Not surprisingly, the publicly owned TV New Zealand has moved to protect its rump by taking a 25 per cent share in the Sky Network, while TVS, a new free commercial service, has decided to protect its movie agreement with Disney by acquiring both the free-to-air and pay rights.

Should our elected representatives decide the time is ripe for a competitive, user pays TV system, they will at least feel secure in the knowledge that they have not been hasty in taking the decision. It is 20 years since Packer group first presented a submission seeking permission to provide a pay TV service via cable to several thousand subscribers in Sydney. Kerry Packer must be watching the latest deliberations with a certain amount of disbelief. But then Australia's pay TV history is studded with reports and submissions.

In 1980, the Fraser government decided to proceed with the introduction of pay and cable TV and ordered a lengthy public inquiry on "how this might be done". The Hawke government took over before recommendations could

be implemented. It rejected the delivery of pay TV via cable, but lifted the hopes of potential operators in 1984 by inviting "expressions of interest" for over-the-air pay TV services. The Department of Communications received 24 expressions from television, radio, newspapers, film distribution/production, theatrical, hardware supply, and other business interests. Thousands of dollars were spent on sending executives, bureaucrats and politicians overseas to study the latest developments while hopeful operators conducted expensive surveys to assess costs and consumer demand

This level of interest spurred the opposition into action in a way that is, by now, all too familiar. The Prime Minister and his cohorts were captured by the network owners, who were firmly opposed to any pay competition. The networks were backed up by film and TV producers who feared pay would open the floodgates to cheap foreign product. By 1986 the whole issue was just too politically volatile and troublesome. It was placed on the back burner until September 1990, and a further review was promised in the meantime.

This review is now under way. Departmental bureaucrats have produced another convoluted 'options report' in their Future Directions series which casts little light on the political machinations underlying the decision-making process. There is, however, one refreshing development. A bipartisan House of Representatives committee, chaired by Labor Party backbencher John Saunderson, is actually conducting a public inquiry, flushing out most of the interested parties and subjecting them to intensive questioning.

Saunderson's inquiry has produced some fascinating insights into the present state of play. The most powerful and identifiable pressure group eyeing off the revenue making potential of pay TV is the publicly owned carriers – Aussat, Telecom and OTC. Network Nine's Len Mauger commented wryly to the committee, "I wonder whether pay TV is being driven by Aussat or Telecom or the consumer?"

The public TV lobby has presented a strong case for community access and educational TV before viewers are asked to pay. The ABC has taken a middle of the road position, arguing that the government must first address such issues as community demand and social impact; but, should it opt for pay TV, then the ABC would not want to be excluded from becoming either a fully fledged pay operator or a program service provider. The SBS, perhaps unwisely, has decided not to enter the fray, although a departmental discussion paper last year floated the idea that subscription revenue could be used to top up its paltry budget.

The three commercial network owners – through the Federation of Australian Commercial Television Stations (FACTS) – have adopted a public strategy of delay. Mindful of the inflated purchase prices paid for their stations and the cost of expanding their networks into country areas, the owners recommend that no pay TV services should be allowed for at least the next five years.

The network owners rightly see that the major threat on the horizon comes from the two major Australian cinema operators and film distributors, Hoyts and Village Roadshow/Greater Union, who have indicated interest in operating and/or supplying product to a pay movie service. Hoyts has been acquiring the full range of rights (theatrical, video and TV, including pay and satellite TV) since 1984. Meanwhile, Village Roadshow is strategically placed to produce movies through its joint ownership of a studio complex in Queensland with Warner Bros, or rather Time Warner, HBO's parent. It has also set up a wholly-owned production and distribution subsidiary in the US.

As the networks observe, these two vertically integrated companies have the most to gain from another outlet for their product. "Monopoly control of movie distribution through cinema/hotel-motel pay-per-view/video cassette rental/pay television windows is a far more real threat than domination of pay television by existing media, given that pay television will be largely a movie medium. Blanket restrictions on current media groups could virtually ensure that film distribution groups control pay television," proclaims the FACTS submission to the Saunderson committee. It calls for appropriate legislative restrictions to control the "potential horizontal integration of film distribution", arguing that the Trade Practices Act would be wholly inadequate to control such "unacceptably discriminatory consequences of unrestrained market power".

The cold wind currently swirling around Australia's new network owners may explain why so few potential pay TV operators have surfaced this time around. High program costs, a tough advertising market and intense competition have left each owner – Alan Bond, Frank Lowy and Chris Skase – in a bind. If they can't succeed, they may have to sell. But where are the buyers? The market has turned: trading stations for inflated prices is no longer an option. They must continue to operate in a cut throat environment and search out new revenue sources in Australia or overseas.

Of course, the beleaguered proprietors are well aware that one solution is to operate these new pay TV channels themselves. The ABC network in the US, for example, is part owner of three cable services – ESPN (sport), Lifetime (women), and Arts and Entertainment. In Australia, Network Nine's owner, Bond Media, has demonstrated that its Sky Channel sports satellite service, which is funded by advertising and an average weekly payment of $150 from 5,500 subscribers, can provide a new revenue source and spread program costs across two outlets.

Sky Channel has commenced 'tiering' its service so subscribers pay an additional fee of $250 to view 'premium' events such as an exclusive Fenech fight. This 'pay per view' system is nourished by 'special' sporting events and new movies, and can produce huge one-off revenues. It is emerging as a new industry sector in the US and offers a taste of services to come when fibre optic cables carry TV and telephones into the home. Telecom planners say that by the year 2000 we should be able to press a button and select the movie of our choice from some distant video library – for a price, of course.

Meanwhile, although Sky Channel is not allowed to service home viewers at this stage (this would be defined as pay TV), it is able to sign up pubs, clubs, mining camps and racing studs as subscribers. The next step could be to establish be to establish a home/office subscriber category. It may then prove difficult to exclude Bond Media, should a decision be taken to introduce full pay TV services. Of course, Bond may not own Network Nine at this stage.

CANNES

THE AUSTRALIAN REPRESENTATION AT CANNES IS A LITTLE DIMINISHED IN SIZE THIS YEAR, INDICATING THE GAP IN PRODUCTION CAUSED BY THE VIRTUAL ELIMINATION OF 10BA AS A SOURCE OF PRODUCTION FUNDING, AND THE DELAY IN SETTING UP THE NEW AUSTRALIAN FILM FINANCE CORPORATION; HOWEVER, SOME INTERESTING FILMS WILL BE ON SHOW IN THE FOLLOWING PAGES WE TALK TO JANE CAMPION, THE DIRECTOR OF *SWEETIE,* INVITED INTO COMPETITION ALONGSIDE *EVIL ANGELS* ; WE INTERVIEW IAN PRINGLE, THE DIRECTOR OF *THE PRISONER OF ST PETERSBURG* WHICH WILL BE SHOWN IN THE 'UN CERTAIN REGARD' SECTION; AND WE HEAR ABOUT GEOFFREY BENNETT'S FIRST FEATURE *THE BOYS IN THE ISLAND*; LOOK AT THE AUSTRALIAN FEATURES AT CANNES, THE AUSTRALIANS WHO'LL BE GOING AND THE NEW ZEALAND PRESENCE . ➢

EIGHT: THE TWO FACES OF JUDY: JUDY DAVIS IN GEORGIA

OPENERS

AUSTRALIAN FILMS AT THE FESTIVAL

AFRAID TO DANCE

Winner of an Australian Writers' Guild award for screenwriter Paul Cockburn, *Afraid to Dance* is the story of two young people whose quirky criminal career is changed forever by the theft of a mailbag

Director: Denny Lawrence Producer: Andrena Finlay Executive producers: Grahame Jennings, Juliet Grimm Screenplay: Paul Cockburn Photography: Steve Arnold Editor: Richard Hindley Production designer: Jane Norris Music: Chris Neal Cast: Nique Needles, Rosey Jones, Grigor Taylor, Tina Bursill, Tom Richards, Mervyn Drake, Annie Byron

BLOWING HOT AND COLD

Blowing Hot and Cold is the story of two men from different backgrounds who become friends Jack Phillips is a service station attendant in a small country town, whose world is disrupted by a fast-talking Italian travelling salesman, Nino Patrovita Their friendship culminates in their attempt to reclaim Jack's wayward daughter, Sally, who has run away from home and is too inexperienced and naive to extract herself from the trouble she is in

Director: Marc Gracie Producer: Rosa Colosimo Scriptwriters: Rosa Colosimo, Reg McLean Photography: Jaems Grant Editor: Nick Lee Art director: David Vassallou Cast: Peter Adams, Joe Dolce, Kate Gorman, Bruce Gorman, Elspeth Ballantyne

THE BOYS IN THE ISLAND

Adapted by Christopher Koch and Tony Morphett from Koch's novel about a young boy, Frank who follows his dreams from the island of Tasmania to the mainland, *The Boys in the Island* marks the feature debut of director Geoffrey Bennett Yves Stening who plays Frank, was also seen in the mini series *Edens Lost*

Director: Geoffrey Bennett Producer: Jane Scott Scriptwriters: Tony Morphett and Christopher Koch Photography: Andrew Lesnie Music: Sharon Calcraft Cast: Yves Stening, James Fox, Joseph Clements, Daniel Pollock, Daniel Heath, Jane Stephens

THE BOYS IN THE ISLAND

EMERALD CITY

CELIA

CELIA

Ann Turner's feature debut, which tells the story of a girl growing up in the Melbourne suburbs in the late 1950s, made its debut in the Panorama section of the Berlin Film Festival

Director: Ann Turner Producers: Timothy White, Gordon Glenn Scriptwriter: Ann Turner Photography: Geoffrey Simpson Editor: Ken Sallows Production design: Peta Lawson Music: Chris Neal Cast: Rebecca Smart, Nicholas Eadie, Marvanne Fahey, Victoria Longley, William Zappa, Deborra Lee Furness

CLOSER AND CLOSER APART

Closer and Closer Apart is inspired by Giovanni Verga's short story, *La Cavalleria Rusticana*, on which the opera of the same name is based It centres on the lives of four people, two couples whose relationship is changed dramatically by an affair

Director: Steve Middleton Producer: Rosa Colosimo Scriptwriter: Angelo Salamanca. Photography: Vladimir Oscerov Art director: Maria Ferro Cast: Steve Bastoni, George Harlem, Marie Louise Walker, Linda Hartley, Kate Jason, Yvette Bentata, George Kapinaris

EMERALD CITY

The temptations of Sydney – fame, money, sex and harbour views – prove almost too much for a Melbourne writer David Williamson has adapted his play of the same name, which takes an inside look at the Australian film industry

Director: Michael Jenkins Producer: Joan Long Scriptwriter: David Williamson Photography: Paul Murphy Editor: Neil Thumpston Production designer: Owen Williams, Music: Chris Neal Cast: John Hargreaves, Robyn Nevin, Chris Haywood, Nicole Kidman.

GEORGIA

Nina Bailey is an investigative lawyer who is led, it seems innocently, to an exhibition of obscure photographs But in the pictures there is a message for Nina, a secret concealed from her all her life about the violent death of Georgia, a woman she has never known As she follows a long buried trail through half truths and ambiguous memories, someone seems to guide her – or to lie in wait

Producer: Bob Weis Director: Ben Lewin Screenplay: Ben Lewin Joanna Murray Smith, Bob Weis Photography: Yun Sokol Production designer: John Dowding Line producer: Margot McDonald Editor: Edward McQueen Mason Cast: Judy Davis, John Bach, Julia Blake, Alex Menglet, Marshall Napier

HUNGRY HEART

HUNGRY HEART

In Luigi Acquisto's feature debut as a director, Sal (Nick Carrata) returns to his parents' home after completing his internship as a doctor in the country He meets Kate (Kimberley Davenport) and an unconventional relationship develops between them

Director: Luigi Acquisto Producers: Rosa Colosimo, Reg McLean Screenplay: Josie

Arnold, Angelo Salamanca, Rosa Colosimo
Director of photography Jaems Grant Editor Courtney Page Music Separate Tables, David Bridie, John Phillips Cast, Nick Carrafa, Dasha Blahova, Kimberley Davenport, Norman Kaye, Osvaldo Maione, Mark Rogers, Lisa Schouw

ISLAND

Island is a film about women and their struggle with fate Three women, an Australian, Sri Lankan and a Greek meet on a Greek Island All are exiles of some kind, escaping from their own personal tragedies Their lives become inextricably linked by their common desires and mutual fear of the outside world Ultimately it is the island itself and the generosity and warmth of the islanders which lead all three women into revelations about themselves and their place in the world The film explores a spectrum of emotions ranging from extreme passion to abject fear, leading to murder, from loneliness to wanton sensuality
Director Paul Cox Producers Paul Cox, Santhana Naidu Scriptwriter Paul Cox Photography Michael Edols. Editor John Scott Production designer Neil Angwin Cast Irene Papas, Eva Sitta, Anoja Weerasinghe, Chris Haywood, Norman Kaye, Francois Bernard.

JIGSAW

On the first morning of her honeymoon, after a whirlwind three week romance, successful businesswoman Virginia Bond finds herself a widow and a prime suspect in her husband's murder As she tries to piece together the jigsaw of her husband's past, Virginia discovers political and business connections worth millions of dollars, and a web of danger and conspiracy
Director Marc Gracie Producer Rosa Colosimo Script Marc Gracie, Editor Nicolas Lee. Art director Chris Kennedy Cast Rebecca Gibney, Michael Coard, Dominic Sweeney, Nico Lathouris, James Wright, Peppie D'Or, Peter Black

KORODA CRESCENT

Cartoonist and satirist Patrick Cook wrote this comedy drama about five elderly survivors of World War II, who discover a web of drug dealing, corruption and police indifference which forces them to take the law into their own hands
Director Ted Robinson Producer Phillip Emanuel Scriptwriter Patrick Cook. Photography Dan Burstall Editor Rob Gibson Production designer Leslie Binns Cast. Warren Mitchell, Bill Kerr, Martin Vaughan, Ruth Cracknell, Madge Ryan, Patrick Thomson, Penne Hackforth Jones, Steve Jacobs

MULL

Originally titled *Mullaway*, *Mull* won the AFI members' prize and Nadine Garner took out the best actress category at the 1988 AFI Awards *Mull*, adapted from a novel by Eron Nicholls, tells the story of a teenage girl who comes to terms with her family and herself when she learns that her mother is critically ill
Director Don McLennan Producer D Howard Grigsby Executive Producer Antony I Ginnane Scriptwriter Jon Stephens Photography Zbigniew Friedrich Editor Nick Lee Production designer Patrick Reardon Cast Nadine Garner, Craig Morrison, Kymara Stowers, Bradley Kilpatrick, Bill Hunter, Sue Jones, Juno Toxas

THE PRISONER OF ST PETERSBURG

Jack, a young man from Australia, is prisoner of St Peterburg (that faded heart of Russian literature) On the run, forever escaping, trapped and penniless in Berlin, he establishes an odd, comic relationship with two girls They invigorate each other with a new lease of life until he is freed from his prison
Director Ian Pringle Producers Daniel Scharf, Klaus Sungen. Scriptwriter Michael Wren Photography Ray Argall Editor Ursula West Production designer Peta Lawson. Cast Noah Taylor, Solveig Dommartin, Katja Teichmann

SCORPIO

Mary Milton, an ambitious and shrewd politician, expects to be given a senior portfolio after the next election, but finds that she has to contend with some devious machinations, party pressure and betrayal
Director Eugene Schlusser Producers Rosa Colosimo, Reg McLean Scriptwriter Patrick Edgeworth, Photography Nicholas Sherman Editor Zbigniew Friedrich Art director Lisa (Blitz) Brennan. Cast Diane Craig, Gary Day, Lynne Williams, Edwin Hodgeman, Don Barker, Tony Mack, Bob Newman

SWEETIE

An account of a bank clerk's efforts to find love then keep it in a world she can't control It aims to give grace to the fleeting moments of clarity through which we direct our lives It also makes efforts to describe the delusions and subterranean forces that most often possess us.
Director Jane Campion Producers. John Maynard, William Mackinnon Scriptwriters. Jane Campion, Gerard Lee Photography Sally Bongers Editor Veronika Haussler
Cast Genevieve Lemon, Karen Colston, Tom Lycos, Jon Darling, Dorothy Barry, Michael Lake, Andre Pataczek.

THINGS AND OTHER STUFF

When three young people break into and enter a luxury home, they're just looking for kicks What they discover is a whole lot more confronting. It's a film about things like friendships, families and fantasies
Director Tony Wellington Producer Michael Lynch Photography Kim Batterham Editor Marcus D'Arcy Producto designer Judith Harvey Music Dale Barron Cast John Polson, Rebecca Rigg, Kelly Dingwall ■

THINGS AND OTHER STUFF

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➤ AN INTERVIEW BY PHILIPPA HAWKER

CANNES

JANE CAMPION

Sweetie is an account of a young bank clerk's efforts to find love then keep it in a world she can't control. It aims to give grace to the fleeting moments of clarity through which we direct our lives. It also makes efforts to describe the delusions and subterranean forces that most often possess us.
JANE CAMPION, GERARD LEE

SWEETIE, the first theatrical feature from director Jane Campion, has been selected for the main competition at Cannes. Written with Gerard Lee, her collaborator on *Passionless Moments*, it tells the story of Kay and Louis, whose relationship is disrupted by the arrival of Kay's sister, Sweetie, and the events that follow. Four of Campion's short films were invited to Cannes in 1986, and *Peel* won the Palme d'Or for the best short film. She has also directed a telefeature, *2 Friends*, from a script by Helen Garner.

PHILIPPA HAWKER. *Where did Sweetie begin?*

JANE CAMPION. Last time I was invited to Cannes with the four short films and it was a big surprise to me – it came out of the blue. I had been thinking about some feature ideas but I just didn't know how possible it was to pursue my own line. I thought I'd have to start making my features look like normal ones. I think the Cannes Film Festival and other festivals I attended, where I watched the audiences watch the films – something I hadn't done very much previously – made me aware that they seemed to like that kind of work. It gave me the confidence to want to give them more and to experiment with my own style. I also felt intuitively, that I wanted to do something modern and something that pursued the interests of my own film generation, the one I went through film school with.

Slowly, during the year I was overseas, I kept going back to that thing. I had some projects in front of it and I pushed them aside saying, "I don't want to do them now, it's time to do something modern, something about the Eighties."

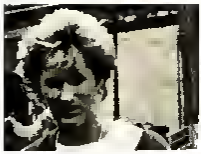
One of those projects was a piece called *The Piano Lesson*, which I felt was a mature work and also more expensive, whereas Sweetie could be done quite cheaply, and I thought that would be an appropriate thing to do first – and I could work with people my generation on it. People probably wouldn't take that sort of risk with *Piano Lesson*, they wouldn't want to use someone from my generation as a DOP, for example.

Sweetie itself started with the idea of trying to talk about relationships that don't work, particularly relationships where people feel they're in love but it's not happening, or they feel love but they don't want to have sex any more. I wanted the lead girl, the main character, to be extremely superstitious, so she had a sort of uncertainty or fear of the world and the only way should could control that was through superstition. It's not abnormal though, it's the normal level of superstition that many people have.

And although we don't go into it very deeply, I thought it would be good to have it that people meditate, not as an unusual thing but as a matter of course – part of the fabric of life. I'd been involved with meditation and workshops and I found it was very prevalent, though people don't admit it. So many of my friends were searching for some depth in their life, trying this and trying and that and it always seemed incredibly humorous when we looked at it. That's what it started with but it's not so heavily in there now.

When did the character of Sweetie come in?

The character was conceived at the beginning. I read one of those stories about how you put a script together, a manual really, and it said that you write out the storyline in three or four pages. I think I was about ready to do it then, so I ran downstairs and sat at the table and wrote it out. She turned up then. It was an experience that both Gerard [Lee] and I had with somebody, so it was fairly familiar. There was a dark side and a funny side to it, which I liked. And since I'd had such fun writing with Gerard before, and I really love his writing. It's a lot faster writing with somebody else. I was overseas at the time and I came back and rang up Gerard and asked him if he'd like to work with me, because I felt he knew a lot of the ideas and because we'd lived together before and shared experiences – it would only be fair to offer it to him. When he came into it obviously it changed again and he was invaluable. You can't underestimate what it is to occupy another human being's mind with a project, you're renting space in their brain basically. He made endless contributions in terms of characters, scenes, dialogue, ideas about how to get round problems, encouragement.



JANE CAMPION:
"YOU HAVE TO BE CANNY ENOUGH TO KNOW WHAT YOU NEED."

How long did it take to write the script?

It didn't take very long. We started in February '87 and we had a final draft by the end of May. And we didn't work together all that time, we did it in bursts. We rented a beach house for a couple of weeks and talked it out to start with. I tried to make it as fun as possible.

Did you have particular strategies, or difficulties in the writing?

We felt that getting the right tone was the key so we wrote lots of scenes until we felt we had them speaking in the right way. There are so many other things that affect tone, of course: the way they speak, the dialogue, heaps of things help to create it and change it and mould it. Gerard and I kept on writing scenes until one of us hit on something that we thought had a good feeling about it. Once we understood what that was we could just keep doing it. And all along the way you find actors that are going to fit that tone. It changes slightly as you go on, of course.

You're always trying to raise your expectations all the time, raise the game with those various elements and make yourself beyond what you were, raise your aspirations in all sorts of ways at once.

Other people make that possible. I was very keen to work with cinematographer] Sally Bongers on the film because we have a very complementary ways of seeing things and it's easy for us to understand each other. We talked quite a bit about how it would be write to shoot it. The art department contributed a lot, and Peter Long put together a lot of visual references for me and that was very stimulating.

[Producer] John Maynard was there from the beginning. He had said he was very keen to produce something with me and we'd known each other for years, before I'd even thought about making films. So we had his support right from the beginning, and got the funding and was really encouraging. The other producer, Billy MacKinnon, was the script editor.

What was the transition to a 35mm feature involve for you?

A lot of people who had been making short films at the same time as me were making their first features and feeling dissatisfied with them. They didn't have enough time, they were pressured into budgets that weren't adequate, not enough shooting time, not enough pre-production, not enough time to make it special. I was very aware of that. You have to be canny enough to know what you need.

I hyperventilated for about two weeks after I found out we'd got the money. I felt really frightened – not that I looked frightened, but I felt it deeply somewhere. It took me about two weeks to settle down. *2 Friends* gave me the confidence to know that I could get through a five week shoot, but I knew *Sweetie* was going to be more difficult.

How did you go about casting it?

I wasn't hard to find Sweetie. We came across Genevieve Lemon early on, and realized there would only be one actress in every generation and we had to try and keep her; she's the most wonderful actress and gorgeous girl.

We did the casting ourselves – me and Tina Andreef, my assistant. Neither of us had done it before and we thought we couldn't afford a casting agent, so it was a huge learning job for us. I'm working with casting agents at the moment, and I don't think I'd ever appreciate what they do as much if I hadn't had to do it myself.

The hard thing was learning what we needed. It was very difficult, because you think you know things and you don't. I'd think about Kay and who she should be, but every actress I met seemed to come up with something good. In the end I let the people suggest themselves to me, I tried to stay open, and I began to learn what was appropriate.

When Karen Colston came in I felt very excited about her because she had this really great innocent quality, earnest and innocent. She's got a gorgeous sense of humour as well, but she was cunning enough not to let to know me about it. I wrote out what I was expecting for Kay, and one of the things was that I thought she should be really pale skinned, and I thought Karen had put something on her face, she was so white, I thought she must have read what I'd written.

It was hard with the older actors, because when actors are 60 or so and have been working a long time you can hear that in them. At the same time our older people had really big parts, and we wondered how people who hadn't had much experience would handle it. Flo [the mother of Sweetie and Kay] ended up being a country'n'Western singer who'd never acted before, but she had such a lovely quality, we all adored her right from the beginning. We wondered if she could make those darker moments, but there's always that question – you can't see everything at the beginning.

It was the same with Gordon [the father] – we went with this guy who had these amazing eyebrows, and this ability to seem fresh all the time. We were really concerned about his memory, whether he'd be able to remember the lines, and he was too, it turned out. He'd stay up all night worrying about it. But he was great. I think once you've decided to go with someone you feel so relieved that the choice is made, and they start to shine. You've got to expect that they will work to get something, you got to trust them to do that, which is quite hard because directors don't like to trust anything.

How did things change in post-production?

SWEETIE

The script's one thing, and then you get everyone into rehearsal and they add something, and then when you get there on the day you've had time to add even more, and then when you get into the editing room, you think, "Why didn't I do that, why didn't I add something more?"

There were surprises in the editing room when it came to dealing with the material. I'd never dealt with that much material before, and the editor, Veronika Haussler, who edited *Passionless Moments* with me, had never done drama before, let alone 35mm, but she's got a fantastic instinct, and we just figured it out for ourselves.

I expected to push the material round and tell it what to do but I found that it was the other way round. The best way was simply to respond to what the material told you it wanted to do – I had a very small will in the matter. By far the best way to go was to be honest about what was there and feel out of that what could be there. If you tried to go against it, everything would go wrong.

You never knew what it was going to feel like next. You'd do all these cuts which seemed like the obvious thing to do and you'd screen it and you'd never have imagined what the result would be. I'd no idea how the relationships would come up and they came up a lot stronger than I thought they were going to: the dynamics of the characters was what led the story in the end, and the more you fixed up characters and made them stronger, every scene they were in started to sparkle or would start to really stand out. I never expected it to be that way, but it's a very character-led story, I suppose. I expected to be able to predict the feeling that came out, but I found that I couldn't.

Where does that element of surprise fit in with the need for control?

In the end you have to drop all your schemes and plans and respond to it. Obviously I'm still the manipulator of tone, and if I think the tone is not clear I can try to clarify it. Or if I think something can be taken two ways and that's not a good thing, I can try to make the material make a stand one way or the other.

You can't recreate the tone, you have to go with what's there. But at the beginning of the film I felt there was an ambiguity, people could think we were very serious and we were actually quite tongue in-cheek. The whole film perhaps has got a bit more gravity than the script, and because of that the early stuff looked like you could mistake it for us being serious, not knowing what we were doing. I was very clear that somehow I had to alter that tone. People had to know that the voice of the filmmakers was that we knew we were being ironic. In the end we chose to do it with music. There are lots of ways you can alter things, but you have to know you need to. In the editing room I could feel that it was ambiguous. But the music added humour and irony.

I had the idea that I would like to have accapella music in it, that everything had to be hand made sound, and someone put me onto a group called the Cafe at Gates of Salvation. They sent us a demo tape, and we just loved it. They write their own stuff too and that was wonderful, because we couldn't afford copyrighted stuff. I love accapella because I feels very straightforwardly emotional – just human beings singing. It gave something that was what we were aspiring to with *Sweetie*, something very humble. ■

JANE CAMPION SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

Tissues (Super 8 short) – director. *Mishaps: Seduction and Conquest* (video) – director 1982. *Peel* (short) – writer/director 1983. *A Girl's Own Story* (short) – producer, writer/director 1984. *Passionless Moments: Recorded in Sydney Australia Sunday October 2nd* (short) – co producer/co-writer/co director 1984. *After Hours* (short) – writer/director 1986. *2 Friends* (telefeature) – director 1989. *Sweetie* (feature) – co writer/director

➤ AN INTERVIEW BY HUNTER CORDAIY

TRAVELS TO THE END OF THE NIGHT

IAN PRINGLE

AND *THE PRISONER OF ST. PETERSBURG*

JOURNEYS ARE AT THE HEART of Ian Pringle's films and, more recently, the making and financing of his work. His latest feature, *The Prisoner of St Petersburg*, was made and co financed in Germany. Shot in atmospheric black & white by Ray Argall, it tells the story of an anguished young man who is obsessed with 19th-century Russian literature. Noah Taylor plays the young man, and Solveig Dommartin and Katja Teichmann are the two women who share his journey to the end of a Berlin night.

HUNTER CORDAIY: *Your films span the Australian film 'revival' of the last 10 years, so perhaps we should begin by talking about the state of cinema now. The recently established Film Finance Corporation has been called "the last chance" for the local industry. Is "last chance" too pessimistic?*

IAN PRINGLE: It's always a hard question because the nature of filmmaking is so unpredictable. I don't think it's a last chance at all. Certainly it's an important time because the funds available to make the sorts of films that have to be made in Australia (or what I feel should should be made) are on a very limited basis, and a lot of that problem comes from the situation that developed under 10BA where, basically, films were made because of the deal and not because of the films themselves.

When you talk about the films that you feel need to be made in Australia, how would you, in broad terms, describe these films?

Well obviously I'm prejudiced because of my own predilections, but I think generally they need to be films that reflect the diversity of out culture, and subject matter that doesn't necessarily lend itself to a mainstream commercial cinema. A rationalization of their budgets is very important, but under a million dollars or even less is, ironically, just as difficult to get as $2 million. And also, the very nature of filmmaking requires one to learn the craft of telling a story in 90 or 120 minutes. You have to become familiar with the format, and that's why the notion of people doing 60 minute films has always confounded me. I don't think there's a great deal to be said for them. On the other hand it gives them the opportunity, certainly, to try their hand, but it's impossible to sell them those films.

You either make a short film, or you go the full way?

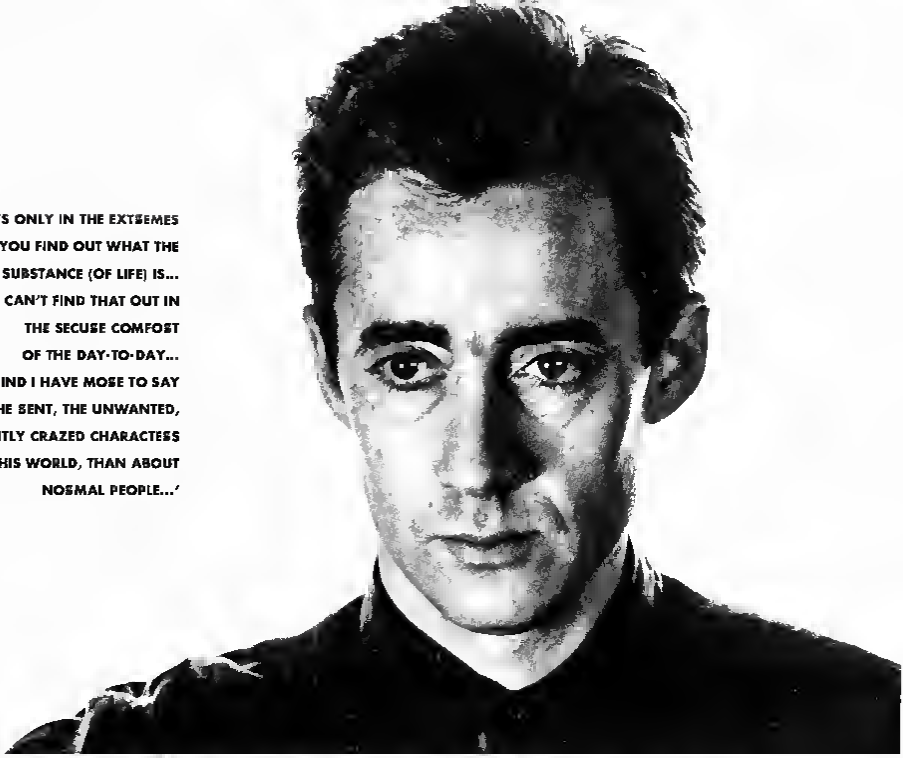
I think there's a substantial leap from a 12 minute short to a feature but I'd go from30 minutes, and I think there can be good shorts of that length, with the rudiments of drama, choreography, the execution of theme, camera, lighting. Then the judgement has to be made if that person has the right project and they're showing the ability and deserve the investment.

When Plains of Heaven *was released you made a statement with John Cruthers, the producer, about independent filmmaking and in particular the need for financially and culturally viable Australian films. Do you feel that cultural and financial viability are still compatible?*

I still think it's a valid statement, and I would put great emphasis on financial viability because obviously with those films that are marginal, one has to be rational about their budgets. I am of the belief that you can make features for small amounts of money and I really defy anybody to contradict me on that.

Do you think structures like the AFC and FFC inevitably bring independent filmmakers closer to the mainstream? The role of these institutions is crucial, particularly for the funding of the avant-garde in Australia.

I think it depends a lot on the people in the job at the time, and it's important that there's a turnover of people in those jobs. I wouldn't say they necessarily put pressure on you to embrace the mainstream but a very curious formul has to be applied when the budget is examined and when the various



'IT'S ONLY IN THE EXTREMES THAT YOU FIND OUT WHAT THE SUBSTANCE (OF LIFE) IS... YOU CAN'T FIND THAT OUT IN THE SECURE COMFORT OF THE DAY-TO-DAY... I FIND I HAVE MORE TO SAY ABOUT THE BENT, THE UNWANTED, THE SLIGHTLY CRAZED CHARACTERS OF THIS WORLD, THAN ABOUT NORMAL PEOPLE...'

advices are given This can happen from the script office, and the other branches as well, it's a complex question without a simple answer. I don't see any adverse pressure from the AFC at the moment. In recent times we've had very good people at the AFC

It is very easy to categorise independent film-makers as artists with low budgets But the real interest of independent film-making is in the exploration of narrative form Can we talk about the way you tell stories on the screen and where the stories come from?

It's always been a very interesting process Basically you come up with an idea and find an appropriate form to put it in. You fall back on your instincts and those instincts are therefore your hallmark To analyze that is quite difficult I don't have a set pattern I do enjoy the process of collaboration It's not always easy and I've had bitter experiences, but I'm still of the opinion that collaboration is vital and I'm lucky enough to have worked with good people

Are you conscious of developing new ways to tell stories? Are you conscious of new forms, or is that also instinctive?

It's a mixture of both, because I always try to not repeat myself or imitate other people and that's part of the adventure and excitement of making films I wouldn't say that I'm consciously going out to find a new form on each occasion

Do you rely heavily on the script Is that a fixed or flexible document?

Well, I put a lot of work into my scripts, but I've found that when I start shooting, the script sometimes need to be changed So much of what I go for is contained in the magic of the moment set up just before you shoot During the shooting the film takes form and shape, and you work with what you've got and develop it accordingly

In many of your films there is a clear relationship between the physical journeys of characters and their psychological or emotional growth in Wrong World there is the journey 'home' to Australia and the drive to South Australia, and in Prisoner of St Petersburg, *a journey to the end of a Berlin night*

I suppose that in this format I find the way to deal with the characters It is probably also something which is at the heart of what I'm saying about all of the characters, and that is that they're in search of something Certainly that's the case in *Wrong World* and also *Prisoner of St Petersburg*, and to some extent *Wronsky* It's very much the case with my next film, *Isabelle Eberhardt*

LEFT: MUSING OVER THEIR FEERS, NOAH TAYLOR, SOLVEIG DOMMARTIN AND KATJA TEICHMANN IN *THE PRISONER OF ST. PETERSBURG*

So searching is a necessary human condition?

It's part of the questioning process which always has to take place within you The people I'm attracted to are always on the edge, there's always something that makes them stand out from the mainstream of society, and to amplify their situation it is usually best for me to put them in the context of a journey or movement That dovetails back into those images of searching and the need to find the heart of things.

Increasingly you are sending your characters underground, into the demi-monde, or what Gorky called 'the lower depths'

Absolutely It's only in extremes that you find out what the substance is, you can't find that out in the secure comfort of a day to day life I find I have more to say about the bent, the unwanted, the slightly crazed characters of this world than normal people I understand them

Cinema always creates characters that are exaggerated from the norm because the nature of the medium is like that

Yes, people want something that's not part of their everyday life and it's just a matter of finding a form that is different enough and for me its usually contained within a journey

Prisoner of St Petersburg *is the story of a young man imprisoned by the literary demons of 19th century Russian novelists Why did you chose those particular novelists?*

I can remember when I read that books and was totally hypnotized and went through a very similar sort of feeling of obsession, feeling that that I understood exactly what they were saying They talk of a world and a time that I knew I'd never be able to experience I was enthralled and I've never forgotten it.

And so the character of the boy, played by Noah Taylor, grew out of that?

That's right

In the film there are moments when the actors are visions of these novels, of previous imaginations , and at other times they are characters in the film Prisoner of St Petersburg *You've made a film with overlapping worlds*

That was the idea It was an attempt to show how the imagination can really take flight and you can be consumed by it A large part of *Wrong World* is playing against the idea of time and memory One of the key notions in that film is the sense of disorientation, of trying to piece together what had happened to the character and of giving the sense of not knowing where he was by mixing the landscape and the cultural signifiers of America and Australia And in *Prisoner of St Petersburg* it was an opportunity to take it one enormous step forward, to play entirely with the imagination

ANOTHER TIME, ANOTHER COUNTRY, ANOTHER TABLE — JO KENNEDY AND RICHARD MOIR IN *WONG WOKLD*

This sense of 'overlapping' is something you can find in the work of other film makers such as Jacques Rivette and Wim Wenders but Rivette's characters don't find fiction such a prison. For them it's almost like a playground.

He does that masterfully and he allows his characters enormous freedom in doing that I learnt a great deal from watching Rivette The way I've chosen to do it, however, is quite different

You both put the concept of fiction overtly and openly into reality, whereas most films do the reverse, by stating this is reality when in fact it is a fiction.

To me it's not necessarily a prison, it's more a puzzle to be solved

There's also a pervading sense of fate in the film, there's a sense of the character played by Noah Taylor saying, "Here's a destiny and I am part of it," and later on Johanna says, "It's possible we are lost" which is a good description of their philosophical condition

I watch people around me and they seem totally hypnotised by what they're doing each day, and I feel quite disconnected from the day to day world

When the young man is finally released through love, at dawn it reminded me of the effect love has on the angels in Wings of Desire *Love makes them human so they can become fully part of this world*

Yes, but also theres something very interesting that happens at the end when there's a sneaky look from Noah which implies he's not out of the prison totally

So he's trying to have both worlds at the same time?

That's the idea – and we cut to her in costume and see them walking towards the Palace at the end

Prisoner of St Petersburg *is your most ambitious film to date, and it clearly depends on a Berlin connection German filmmakers regularly come to Australia but how did you develop this film the other way round*

The initial idea could have taken place in Melbourne, however, circumstances had me in Berlin at a particular time and the opportunity arose to get money from the Senate of Berlin, which enabled me to access funds and it meant that I had to shoot the film there so the story had to be adapted accordingly It could have b en any European city, but there is a wonderful quality to Berlin that is immediately exciting to a filmmaket

What was the balance between Australian and German money in the budget for the film?

The balance of the money came from the AFC's Special Production Fund It was 280 000 DM from the Senate of Berlin, and the AFC put in about 170,000 DM, which is a considerable part of the budget out of a total budget of 448,000 DM which is approximately A$330,000 at the time we did the film Part of the formula of making these low budget films is having a dedicated team to work with. Not that you exploit them but they don't receive massive salaries It was the best crew I've ever worked with – I was lucky enough to have Ray Argall again, and Daniel Scharf, my producer, was extraordinary, and I had an Australian production designer, Peta Lawson I was fortunate in knowing one person before I began, a lighting designer called Andre Beltzki. He phoned up various friends and said the film was something he felt they should work on and they came from all over West Germany to Berlin It was a scheduled shoot of 22 days but on calculations we only had 20 days to shoot , it was cut in four weeks and we had a day and a half to do the mix

How did you get to work with Solveig Dommartin?

I've known her for a while now, and when I was putting together the idea I just asked her She was a bit cautious at the beginning because the script was at a very nebulous stage, but she trusted me and has such extraordinary energy and positive power that that she was a large part of the whole thing And Katja Teichmann, who played the part of Johanna, had never done a film before — she's a stage actress

How did you find her?

Well, I just went to the theatres in Berlin on various recommendations, one theatre after another, saw her, and thought she was perfect For the rest of the parts I didn't have the luxury of doing any screen testing or rehearsals, so I didn't meet over half the other actors until the day of the shoot

Part of the problem was that the script was, initially, logistically too difficult and I had to condense many scenes to one or two locations So I had to dovetail many things together and minimalize the amount of moving of the crew Our biggest problem was it was shot in the middle of summer and in the northern summer it gets dark about 10 o'clock and light about 4 o'clock in the morning, so I had to think about the structure of the scenes and leave many of the close-ups to the very end which meant in some cases we had to build black outs to get the shots done

Though your films are increasingly more 'different' from other Australian films, much of current cinema has a sense of repetition, of being made before

Yes, it's like watching TV You can see the same thing on four stations, and even the ABC is trying to be a commercial station The only gain from that is more homogenized televison

You create competition by making everything the same, competition is not a choice between the same things

Absolutely – and I don't think the ABC is serving a pluralistic society This goes to the heart of an even more profound problem in the film industry, which is compounded by the ABC Low-budget features were one opportunity for the ABC to become involved, by screening these films, and if there had been support from the ABC, such as co-financing or whatevet, there would have been an opportunity for a lot more low budget features to be made

Why do Australian films now tend to have the same appearance?

It's something we touched on earlier, which is to do with markets, and because of the structure of 10BA out major market has been the commercial American market Under 10BA the presales had to be made and they invariably were done through American companies It was necessary to get the percentage up which would be attractive to financiers Anybody could have seen through the rorts in that system from the beginning I'm not saying there's anything wrong with making films for the American market, it's just that the way it happened left no avenues for anything else

There are other ways of making films, which are successfully happening in Tokyo, Berlin and London, for example, and we could learn from these models.

It's really inspiring But there are problems with independent producers in Australia Basically there are very few who have talent and enough courage to go out and search fot those alternative means That's a real vacuum in Australia

Why is that?

Well I think the luxury of 10BA spoiled people enormously, and gave them a false notion of what their abilities are There are very few producers in Australia in the area we're talking about, with the talent and determination to go out and try Basically I gave up a year and a half ago with 10BA

And you then turned to overseas?

Well, I had to I had to find other ways to finance the films and you have to take your life in your own hands be responsible for yourself

And overseas was always there...

It's always been there and the opportunities have always been there

Do you feel you've broken out of an isolation, imaginatively and financially?

Yes, I think of myself as being very lucky, and luck is a big part of it, its not always insightful strategic thinking

Is this going to be the future pattern as far as your films are concerned ?

Indeed Isabelle Eberhardt – *The Oblivion Seeker* will be done through three production companies, Les Films Aramis in Paris, Seon Films in Melbourne, and Roadmovies, Berlin, and the financing and distribution linkup is being handled by August Entertainments based in London and Los Angeles August Entertainments are the hub for putting the whole deal together.

In Australia I think we're at a very interesting stage with the FFC There is the opportunity to take advantage of what it's offering, and it's a matter of imagination on the part of producers and directors who want to get their films made. You can work out a formula, I'm sure, with what has been set up there, to make 'difficult' films There will always be be negative comments because there's a pervasive, cynical attitude in the industry about any Government body, but I really believe the chance is there if you take it It's a matter of coming up with that speculative part of the investment to access the funds It's how you put the components of the script together as a package, and those calculations have to be taken very early in the project This is the brutal reality — you have to do your homework You have to get out there and find people who are interested in the script There are distributors and financiers who will give you money if you shake them up enough

Do you see a lot of that work being done overseas or within Australia?

It's not easy within Australia You need funds to get out on the road, but if you're prepared to live on the smell of an oil rag, you'll find a way

FILMOGRAPHY

Flights, drama, 50 mins, producer, director, writer *The Cartographer and the Waiter*, drama, 56 mins Producer, director, writer (1979) *Wronsky*, drama, 60 mins Producer, director writer (1980) *Dendeross Orhan*, documentary, director (1981) *Rare Is His Back who Has No Brother*, documentary 166 mins Producer director *The Plains of Heaven*, feature, 80 mins. Director, writer *Wrong World*, feature, 96 mins Director, writer *Idiomania*, documentary 60 mins Director *The Tale of Ruby Rose*, feature, 96 mins Associate producer *Celia*, feature, 98 mins Associate producer *Lover Boy*, drama, 60 mins Associate producer *The Prisoner of St Petersburg*, drama, 85 mins. Director, co-writer

➤ REPORT BY KATHY BAIL

BOYS IN THE ISLAND

THERE IS A CERTAIN amount of daring attached to *The Boys in the Island*, a tenacious producer who convinces the film's investors to 'go on' after the distributor pulls out; a director given a break on his first feature when the industry is in a lull, a highly-regarded novelist who, disillusioned with the screen interpretation of one of his books, won't risk it again and begins work on his own script, a cast of young unknowns, and a highly experienced and worldly English actor brought in to keep this newly discovered 'brat pack' cast in line.

The feature has been completed in time for Cannes. One of the more interested parties at the film's premiere will be the Australian Film Commission, which has continued to back the film through its long and turbulent history.

The Boys in the Island began its life as a series of poems and was expanded into a novel and published in 1958. Its author, Christopher Koch, was 23 when it was completed – it was his first novel. Since then it has been trimmed and tightened and reissued by publishers Angus & Robertson. "The shape of *The Boys in the Island* should now finally be clear," Koch wrote in 1986.

But there were others eager to see it emerge in another form. Gillian Armstrong, eager to develop the novel for the cinema, approached Koch, but, when an offer to direct *Mrs Soffel* in the US came, the idea was dropped. Koch hadn't imagined *Boys* as a feature film, but the idea had been planted. He decided to try to develop it on his own. Bitterness about his experience with the screen adaptation of his novel, *The Year of Living Dangerously*, ("there was a lot of conflict about creative control") heightened his determination to see the project through.

Collaborating with scriptwriter and friend Tony Morphett, the two writers convinced Carl Schultz (*Travelling North*, *Careful He Might Hear You*) and producer Jane Scott (*Crocodile Dundee* line producer, *Crocodile Dundee II* co producer, *Goodbye Paradise*, *On Loan*) to join the team.

The prospectus, under 10BA, came out in 1987. Antony I. Ginnane had become involved as executive producer and, through his company International Film Management Limited (IFML), the Anglo American distribution company Hemdale was added to the credits.

"The short version," says Jane Scott, "is that it floundered." Hemdale pulled out of the deal, as it did with other films on the IFML slate. The investors, however, decided at an extraordinary meeting in 1988 to continue with the production of *Boys*, even though it didn't have a distributor, and IFML was removed.

At this stage Koch and Morphett were on their sixth or seventh draft and it finally appeared that the production was coming together. But then Schultz was unavailable. "After two years, I think he had mentally shot the film," says Scott. He was in the US shooting *The Seventh Sign*.

Four weeks before pre-production, director Geoffrey Bennett was called in. A film school graduate, his credits included a children's telefeature, *On Loan* (one of the *Winners* series), a documentary for Channel 9 on the motorcycle hero Wayne Gardner, and numerous music videos.

The story he was given seemed more than appropriate. "It's a rites of passage film," says Bennett. "But it's also about dreams and fantasies, and how dreams and reality get in the way of each other."

The Boys in the Island is set in the 1950s, beginning in rural Tasmania and shifting to mainland Melbourne. It traces the life of one boy, Frank, who dreams not simply of the mainland, but of an 'Otherland', that "had no name and was no place that could be explained."

Koch suggests that the theme of a provincial boy moving to the 'big smoke' is more a part of the American literary tradition than the Australian one, but admits that there are autobiographical elements in Frank's story. "You write about your own experience. I grew up in Tasmania. I went to Melbourne. I was following dreams.

"But I didn't want to write about an artist or a writer. Frank is an ordinary boy – he has no particular talent. My theory is that ordinary people have the most marvellous dreams, although this extraordinary dream life is not necessarily expressed."

Inevitably the dreams of Frank (Yves Stening) and his mates (Joseph Clements, Daniel Pollock and Daniel Heath) become nightmares. They enter the world of Keeva (Jane Stephens) a siren who seduces and outwits them all, and George (James Fox), the streetwise crim.

Says Bennett: "It has elements of a film like *The Year My Voice Broke* because it is a film about growing up. It's set in the country; it's golden, romantic and beautiful. But it does a strange thing. It goes into film noir; it becomes a Fifties style gangster film. That's where it goes off the edge, which is what I loved about it.

"Even though it's set in the Fifties it has a very modern feel. These kids are like young punks of the Fifties really. It seems very modern, and it was shot that way too. In a film noir way." But, he is quick to add, "it doesn't look like a film clip – the cuts are not that quick!" (He and DOP Andrew Lesnie have done several music videos together.)

The producer, director and writers agreed that *The Boys in the Island* should be "jam-packed with music" and feel it is integral to the telling of the story. It starts with country and western, picks up on jazz and rock 'n' roll, drawn together by Sharon Calcraft's musical score.

→ THE BOYS IN THE ISLAND CONTINUED BOTTOM OF PAGE 38

NEW ZEALAND AT CANNES

A SHORT FILM from New Zealand has been selected for the official competition at Cannes. *Kitchen Sink*, directed by Alison McLean, is the first New Zealand short to be chosen for competition. McLean is now working on the script for her first feature, *Crush*.

Nine New Zealand producers will join the New Zealand delegation to Cannes this year, the10th year the New Zealand Film Commission has represented the industry at the festival. The delegation will be headed by Film Commission chairperson David Gascoigne and newly-appointed executive director Judith McCann. New Zealand-born McCann spent 10 years working in the Canadian film industry, the last three as deputy director of Telefilm Canada, the federal film and television financing organization.

Although there will be only one new feature screening at the market place, the nine producers have a swag of projects in development or production for which they will be seeking international interest.

The film which will be screening at the market is *Zsigel* an action comedy directed by Richard Riddiford. Michael Mizrahi plays a telephone operator with a penchant for listening to other people's conversations, and Lucy Sheehan is a woman with a bizarre other life.

There are two New Zealand projects now in production. *Meet the Feebles*, the second feature from Peter Jackson, which is a behind the scenes expose of a puppet revue company. Producer Jim Booth will also be looking for interest in Jackson's forthcoming *Braain Dead*, in which a houseful of zombies wreak havoc on a happy home.

Martyn Sanderson's *Flying Fox in a Freedom Tree*, based on Albert Wendt's story about a young Samoan making a drastic adaptation to Western civilization, is also in production.

Gregor Nicholas's *User Friendly*, a comedy about a dog which may or may not hold the secret to everlasting life, is due to start shooting in May. Producer Frank Stark will be representing it at the festival.

International sales of these projects will be handled by the NZFC.

New Zealand-born Jane Campion, whose first feature, *Sweetie*, is in competition this year, will start shooting *To the Is land* in New Zealand in August. Based on Janet Frame's autobiographical trilogy, the project will be made as a mini series and will also be available as 150-minute theatrical feature. Producer Bridget McCann will be at Cannes to discuss the project's theatrical potential, and the NZFC will handle international theatrical sales. Britain's Channel 4 will look after European TV sales, and TVNZ will handle TV sales in in Asia (excluding Japan) and the Middle East.

Gaylene Preston's *Ruby and Rata* is now in pre-production and will start shooting in October. It tells the story of two women, one young and one old, who compete for the attention of nine-year-old Willie, who starts fires. Producer Robin Laing will be in Cannes to discuss presales.

Barry Barclay, director of *Neria*, has a project in development, *Te Rua*, which is a political thriller about Maori terrorists in Berlin. Producers John O'Shea and Craig Walter will be at Cannes.

Hard Road, a drama about two World War I conscientious objectors, to be directed by Yvonne McKay, will be represented at the festival by producer Dave Gibson. Also in development is *The Returning*, a supernatural thriller. Producers Trisha Downie and John Day will be in Cannes to discuss presales.

• THE BOYS IN THE ISLAND: CONTINUED

While it is generally hard to satisfy a novelist, Koch appears to be pleased with the casting of the lead actors, particularly Yves Stening as Frank. Jane Scott laughs off the suggestion that she has a brat pack on her hands. "There were some horrendous moments, a few scrapes," she says. "But it was fascinating to find new talent."

Bennett was involved in the casting and was happy to be working with a cast of 'unknowns'. "I improvise a lot," he says. "When we rehearse I throw the script aside – I work around the script rather than inside it. I find that young people and inexperienced actors are much better at improvising, they're freer. On the set we go back to the script, but they've learned to be free, to take chances. If something accidental happens on set, rather than being bewildered and lost, they will go with it."

Getting the project off the ground could itself be regarded as some kind of exercise in improvisation. It will be intriguing to see the form in which *The Boys in the Island* – a romantic aspiration from the beginning – finally emerges. ■

WHO'S WHO AT CANNES

PHILLIP ADAMS
Chairman, Australian Film Commission

PETER BARBETT
Special Broadcasting Service
Hotel Carlton

GEOFF BENNETT
Director, *Boys in the Island*

JANE CAMPION
Director, co-writer, *Sweetie*

PETER CASTALDI
2JJJ
Hotel Vendome

KEVIN CHILDS
The Age

JONATHAN CHISSICK
President, Film division
Hoyts Corporation,
Hotel du Cap

AL CLARK
Beyond International Group

BOSA COLOSIMO
Colosimo Film Productions
Les Arcades, 32 rue Cdt Andre

FRANK COX
Newvision Films
Hotel Sofitel Mediterranee

PAUL COX
Illumination Films

HANNAH DOWNIE
Soundstage Australia Limited
Residence Croisette Maubourg
12 rue Latour

PHILLIP EMANUEL
Phillip Emanuel Productions

JOHN FIGE
Fire & Brimstone Productions

LEON FINK
Chairman, Hoyts Corporation
Hotel du Cap

ALAN FINNEY
Village Roadshow Corporation

GRAHAM FORD
Pro Image/CEL

ANNE-MARIE GASKIN
Generation Films

MANY GIBSON
Australian Film Commission

ANTONY I. GINNANE
International Film Management Ltd
Hotel du Cap

JULIET GRIMM
Overview Films

DAVID HANNAY
David Hannay Productions
Condor Releasing Co
Les Jardins de la Croisette
rue du Canada

GARY HAMILTON
Australian Film Commission

CHRIS HAYWOOD
Illumination Films

JENIFER HOOKE

KATE KELLY

KIM LEWIS
Kim Lewis Marketing
2nd floor
9 rue Notre Dame

MICHAEL LYNCH
Forcast Pty Ltd

BILLY MACKINNON
Producer, *Sweetie*

LYN MCCARTHY
Dendy Cinema

TERENCE MCMAHON
Broad Stone Pty Ltd
Hotel Montfleury

MICHAEL MCMICHAEL
Pan Film Enterprises
Hotel Splendid

JOHN MAYNARD
Arena Films

TIBOR MESZAROS
Soundstage Australia Limited
Residence Croisette Maubourg

NATALIE MILLER
Sharmill Films

BRUCE MOIR
Film Australia Pty Ltd

JOHN MORRIS
New South Wales Film and
Television Office

BLAKE MURDOCH
Variety

SUE MURRAY
Australian Film Commission

CARMELO MUSCA
CM Films

JOHN PAPADOPOULOS
Fire & Brimstone Productions

GEOFF POLLOCK
Film Victoria
Hotel Splendid

IAN PRINGLE
Seon Film Productions
(Australia) Pty Ltd
Residence Croisette Maubourg

BRIAN ROSEN
Executive Producer, *Boys in the Island*

DANIEL ROWLAND
Chief Executive
Australian Film Commission

DANIEL SCHAHF
Seon Film Productions
(Australia) Pty Limited
Residence Croisette Maubourg

JANE SCOTT
Great Scott Productions
Producer *Boys in the Island*

JOHN SEXTON

YVES STENING
Actor, *Boys in the Island*

DAVID STRATTON
Variety

IRENE TAYLOR
Pro Image/CEL

VICTORIA TREGLE
Australian Film Commission

PRASANNA VASUDEVAN
Australian Film Commission

MICHAEL WALSH
Brighton Bay Cinema

RORYN WATTS
Film Australia Pty Ltd

BOB WEIS
Generation Films

KATE WHITE

KIM WILLIAMS
Chairman,
Australian Film Finance Corporation
Hotel Carlton

■

PRODUCTION BAROMETER

LOCAL FEATURE FILM PRODUCTION slumped dramatically (24 in the last calendar year compared with 44 in 1987). This trend is partly a reaction to the demise of the 10BA tax concessions as producers and investors awaited the opening of the newly formed Australian Film Finance Corporation. Telefeature production is down, with many projects serving as pilots for potential series (e.g. *Raw Silk*, *Chances*). The mini series continues to be a growth area with a total of 16 produced in 1988 (12 in 1987) helped by a large injection of overseas investment in the form of pre sales and/or co-production deals.

PAUL HARRIS

Budget figures have been supplied to Cinema Papers by the producers. Where the producers did not want budgets published, those productions are marked N/A in the budget column. In most cases budgets were supplied off the record, enabling the accurate computing of overall figures and averages.

THEATRICAL FEATURES

TOTAL NUMBER PRODUCED	24
TOTAL BUDGET	$62,730,000
AVERAGE BUDGET	$2,613,736

TELEFEATURES

TOTAL NUMBER PRODUCED	10
TOTAL BUDGET	$11,830,000
AVERAGE BUDGET	$1,108,333

MINI-SERIES

TOTAL NUMBER PRODUCED	16
TOTAL BUDGET	$90,371,000
AVERAGE BUDGET	$5,648,187

FEATURES

TITLE (PRODUCTION COMPANY: PRODUCER: WRITER: DIRECTOR)	BUDGET AND PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY	
Against the Innocent (Film Art Doco: Richard Jones: Daryl Dellora: Jenni Hocking: Daryl Dellora)	$131,000	Nov
Blowing Hot and Cold (Colosimo Film Productions Pty Ltd: Rosa Colosimo: Rosa Colosimo, Reg McLean: Marc Gracie)	N/A	March
The Boys in the Island (Esmarlo Pty Ltd: Jane Scott: Christopher Koch: Tom Morphett, Geoffrey Bennett)	N/A	August
Cappuccino (Archer Films: Anthony Bowman: Sue Wild: Anthony Bowman: Anthony Bowman)	N/A	August
Celia (Seon Film Productions (Australia): Timothy White: Gordon Glenn: Ann Turner: Ann Turner)	$1.4 million	January
Cinderella's Secret (working title) (Yoram Gross Film Studios: Yoram Gross: Yoram Gross: Leonard Lee: Yoram Gross)	N/A	March
Closer and Closer Apart (Colosimo Film Productions Pty Ltd: Rosa Colosimo: Angelo Salamanca: Steve Middleton)	N/A	August
Depth of Feeling (working title) (Phillip Emanuel Productions: David Douglas, Henry Tefay: Kee Young, Arch Nicholson)	N/A	Nov
Dot in Space (Yoram Gross Film Studios, Yoram Gross: John Palmer, Yoram Gross)	N/A	June
Emerald City (Limelight Productions, Joan Long: David Williamson, Michael Jenkins)	$2.8 million	February
Georgia (Jethro Films: Bob Weis: Bob Weis: Ben Lewin, Joanna Murray Smith: Ben Lewin)	$3 million	February
Heaven Tonight (Boulevard Films: Frank Howson: Frank Howson: Pino Amenta)	N/A	October
Island (Illumination Films: Paul Cox, Santhana Naidu, Paul Cox: Paul Cox)	$2 million	Nov
Jigsaw (Colosimo Film Productions Pty Ltd: Rosa Colosimo, Marc Gracie: Chris Thompson, Marc Gracie)	N/A	October
Kokoda Crescent (Phillip Emanuel Productions Ltd: Philip Emanuel, Patrick Cook: Ted Robinson)	$2 million	March
Lady's Ladies (Tra La La Films: Patric Juillet: Jennifer Claire: Wendy Hughes: Judy Morris, Ronald Allen: Judy Morris)	$2,825,000	August
Plotka (JD Productions: John Mandelberg: John Dingwall: John Dingwall)	N/A	February
The Punisher (New World Pictures [Australia]: Robert Kamen: Robert Kamen: Mark Goldblatt)	$12 million	August
Salute of the Jugger (Handisom Investments Pty Ltd/Kamaha Corporation Ltd: Charles Roven: David Webb Peoples, David Webb Peoples)	$10 million	August
Sweetie (Arena Films: John Maynard: William Mackinnon: Jane Campion, Gerard Lee: Jane Campion)	N/A	Sept.
Things and All That Stuff (Produvin Pty Ltd: Michael Lynch: Anthony Wellington: Anthony Wellington)	$425,000	August
Vicious (David Hannay Productions Pty Ltd: David Hannay: Charles Hannah: Karl Zwicky: Paul Hogan, Karl Zwicky)	N/A	January
What the Moon Saw (Boulevard Films, Frank Howson: Frank Howson, Pino Amenta)	$3,350,000	August

FEATURE CO PRODUCTION

TITLE (PRODUCTION COMPANY: PRODUCER: WRITER: DIRECTOR)	BUDGET AND PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY	
The Prisoner of St Petersburg (Seon Film Productions/Panorama Films, Daniel Scharf, Klaus Singer: Ian Pringle: Michael Wren, Ian Pringle)	$330,000	June

TELEFEATURES

TITLE (PRODUCTION COMPANY: PRODUCER: WRITER: DIRECTOR)	BUDGET AND PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY	
Badlands 2000 (Hoyts Productions/Columbia Pictures, Brian Rosen: Reuben Leder: George Miller)	N/A	February
Barracuda (Amalgamated Barracuda: Barbara Gibbs: Philip Roall: Keith Thompson: Pino Amenta)	N/A	February
Chances (Beyond International Group: Mark De Freest: David Phillips, Mike Smith)	N/A	October
The Invader (Hoyts Productions/Tri Star International, John Ashley: Frank Lupo: Richard Colla)	$3.1 million	February
The Last Voyage (Spectator Films/Samson Productions: Tamara Assevev: Sue Milliken, Robert Collins, Robert Collins)	N/A	Sept
Prejudice (Film Australia Pty Ltd, Pamela Williams: Pamela Williams, Ian Munro)	N/A	February
Raw Silk (Television House: John Young, Keith Aberdein: Greg Dee)	$400,000	March
Rescue (ABC: John Edwards: Eileen de Roche: Peter Fisk)	N/A	October
Somerset Street (Harvey Michaela Productions: Harvey Michaela: David Cummings, Brian Phillis	$100,000	October
The Tourist (SBS Desert Lion Productions, Sue Salem: Sue Salem: Terry Bourke)	$300,000	March

MINI-SERIES

TITLE (PRODUCTION COMPANY: PRODUCER: WRITER: DIRECTOR)	BUDGET AND PRINCIPAL PHOTOGRAPHY	
Act of Betrayal (ABC: Griffin Productions TV S/Ray Alchin: Nick Evans: Nick Evans: Michael Chaplin: Lauretee Gordon Clark)	$5 million	February
The Australian Break (Mistvhill Pty Ltd/Roadshow Coote & Carroll/Amalgamated Portman Prods [UK], Harley Manners — Chris Langman)	$4 million	February
Barlow and Chambers – A Long Way from Home (Roadshow Coote and Carroll/Steve Krantz Prods [US] Moya Iceton, Bill Kerby: Jerry London)	N/A	March
Body Surfer (John Sexton Productions/ABC: Ross Matheson, Suzanne Hartley, Chris Lee: Denis Whitburn, Ian Barry)	$5 million	October
A Dangerous Life (Aver Productions, Hal McElroy: David Williamson, Robert Markowitz)	$16 million	February
Darlings of the Gods (Simpson Le Mesurier/ABC/Euston Films, Roger Le Mesurier: Roger Simpson: Graeme Farmer, Catherine Millar)	$4.5 million	March
Edens Lost (Margaret Fink Films Pty Ltd ABC Central Independent TV, Margaret Fink: Michael Gow: Neil Armfield)	$3.9 million	October
Fields of Fire III (Palm Beach Pictures: David Elfick, Irene Korol, Patricia Johnson: David Elfick)	N/A	October
The Four-Minute Mile (ABC/BBC/CB Seven Productions/Centre Films; Errol Sullivan, Pom Oliver; David Williamson, Jim Goddard)	N/A	February
The Heroes (TVS Films: Anthony Buckley: Peter Yeldham: Donald Crombie)	$5.9 million	Sept.
Naked Under Capricorn (Resolution Films: Ray Alchin: Peter Yeldham: Rob Stewart)	$4,180,000	August
The Rainbow Warrior Conspiracy (Golden Dolphin Productions, Robert J. Loader; David Phillips, Chris Thomson)	N/A	March
Realms of Gold (TelEsyn [Cardiff]/Kingcroft: Terry Ohlsson, Howard Griffiths, Paul Turner)	N/A	Nov
Shadow of the Cobra (View Films Pty Ltd, Ben Gannon, Michael Lawrence: Scott Roberts, Mark Joffe)	$7,150,000	Sept
Tanamera Lion of Singapore (Grundy Motion Pictures / Central Independent Television [UK] Jon Blades: David Lee, Peter Gibbs; John Power: Kevin Dobson)	N/A	May
This Man, This Woman (Crawfords Australia ABC, Graham Moore, Terry Stapleton, Paul Moloney)	N/A	October

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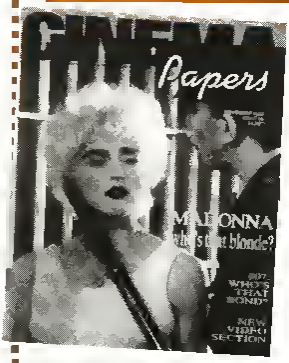

NUMBER 1 (JANUARY 1974)
David Williamson Ray Harryhausen Peter Weir Antony Ginnane Gillian Armstrong Ken G Hall *The Cars that Ate Paris*

NUMBER 2 (APRIL 1974)
Censorship Frank Moorhouse Nicolas Roeg Sandy Harbutt Film under Allende *Between The Wars, Alvin Purple*

NUMBER 3 (JULY 1974)
Richard Brennan, John Papadopolous Willis O'Brien William Friedkin *The True Story Of Eskimo Nell*

NUMBER 10 (SEPT/OCT 1975)
Nagisa Oshima Philippe Mora Krzysztof Zanussi, Mario Ferreri Marco Bellocchio gay cinema

NUMBER 11 (JANUARY 1977)
Emile De Antonio, Jill Robb Samuel Z Arkoff Roman Polanski Saul Bass *The Picture Show Man*

NUMBER 12 (APRIL 1977)
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NUMBER 13 (JULY 1977)
Louis Malle Paul Cox John Power Jeanine Scawell Peter Sykes Bernardo Bertolucci *In Search Of Anna*

NUMBER 14 (OCTOBER 1977)
Phil Noyce Matt Carroll Eric Rohmer, Terry Jackman John Huston *Luke's Kingdom The Last Wave Blue Fire Lady*

NUMBER 15 (JANUARY 1978)
Tom Cowan Francois Truffaut John Faulkner Stephen Wallace, the Taviani brothers Sri Lankan cinema *The Irishman The Chant Of Jimmie Blacksmith*

NUMBER 16 (APRIL JUNE 1978)
Gunnel Lindblom John Duigan, Steven Spielberg Tom Jeffrey *The African Project* Swedish cinema *Don't Panic*

NUMBER 17 (AUG/SEPT 1978)
Bill Bain Isabelle Huppert Brian May Polish cinema, *Newsfront The Night The Prowler*

NUMBER 18 (OCT/NOV 1978)
John Lamond Sonia Borg Alain Tanner, Indian cinema *Dimboola, Caddy's Child*

NUMBER 19 (JAN/FEB 1979)
Antony Ginnane Stanley Hawes, Jeremy Thomas Andrew Sarris, sponsored documentaries, *Blue Fin*

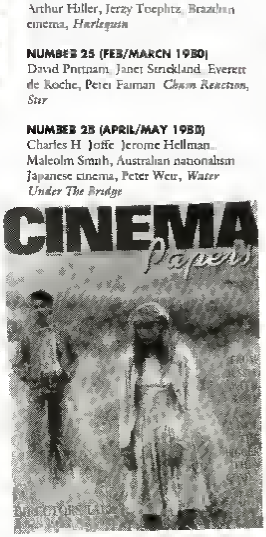
NUMBER 20 (MARCH APRIL 1979)
Ken Cameron Claude Lelouch Jim Sharman, French cinema, *My Brilliant Career*

NUMBER 22 (JULY/AUG 1979)
Bruce Petty Luciana Arrighi Albie Thoms, *Stone, Alison's Birthday*

NUMBER 24 (DEC/JAN 1980)
Brian Trenchard Smith Ian Holmes, Arthur Hiller, Jerzy Toeplitz, Brazilian cinema, *Harlequin*

NUMBER 25 (FEB/MARCH 1980)
David Puttnam, Janet Strickland Everett de Roche, Peter Fairman *Chain Reaction, Star*

NUMBER 26 (APRIL/MAY 1980)
Charles H Joffe Jerome Hellman Malcolm Smith, Australian nationalism Japanese cinema, Peter Weir, *Water Under The Bridge*



NUMBER 27 (JUNE JULY 1980)
Randal Kleiser, Peter Yeldham Donald Richie Richard Franklin s obituary of Alfred Hitchcock the New Zealand film industry *Grendel Grendel Grendel*

NUMBER 28 (AUG/SEPT 1980)
Bob Godfrey Diane Keaton Tom Burns, John O Shea Bruce Beresford *Bad Timing Kondagamai*

NUMBER 29 (OCT/NOV 1980)
Bob Ellis Lin Wnds Edward Wood ward Lino Brocka Stephen Wallace Philippine cinema *Cruising, The Last Outlaw*

NUMBER 36 (FEBRUARY 1982)
Kevin Dobson Brian Kearney Sonia Hofmann, Michael Rubbo *Blow Out, Broken Mount Body Heat, The Man From Snowy River*

NUMBER 37 (APRIL 1982)
Stephen MacLean, Jacki Weaver Carlos Saura Peter Ustinov, women in drama *Monkey Grip*

NUMBER 38 (JUNE 1982)
Geoff Burrowes, George Miller, James Ivory Phil Noyce, Joan Fontaine, Tony Williams law and insurance, *Far East*

NUMBER 39 (AUGUST 1982)
Helen Morse, Richard Mason Anja Breien David Millikan, Derek Granger, Norwegian cinema, National Film Archive *We Of The Never Never*

NUMAEB 40 (OCTOBER 1982)
Henri Safran Michael Ritchie Pauline Kael, Wendy Hughes, Ray Barrett, *My Dinner With Andre, The Return Of Captain Invincible*

NUMBER 41 (DECEMBER 1982)
Igor Auzins, Paul Schrader Peter Tammer, Liliana Cavani Colin Higgins, *The Year Of Living Dangerously*

NUMBER 42 (MARCH 1983)
Mel Gibson, John Waters, Ian Pringle, Agnes Varda, copyright, *Strikebound, The Man From Snowy River*

NUMBER 43 (MAY/JUNE 1983)
Sydney Pollack, Denny Lawrence Graeme Clifford *The Dismissal, Careful Hi Might Hear You*

NUMBER 44-45 (APRIL 1984)
David Stevens, Simon Wincer, Susan Lambert a personal history of *Cinema Papers Street Kids*

NUMBER 46 (JULY 1984)
Paul Cox Russell Mulcahy Alan J Pakula Robert Duvall Jeremy Irons, *Eureka Stockade, Waterfront, The Boy In The Bush, A Woman Suffers, Street Hero*

NUMBER 47 (AUGUST 1984)
Richard Lowenstein, Wim Wenders, David Bradbury Sophia Turkiewicz, Hugh Hudson, *Robbery Under Arms*

NUMBER 48 (OCT/NOV 1984)
Ken Cameron Michael Pattinson, Jan Sardi Yoram Gross *Bodyline, The Slim Dusty Movie*

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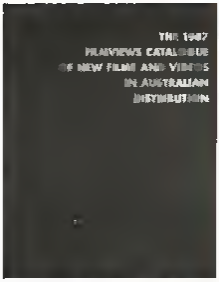

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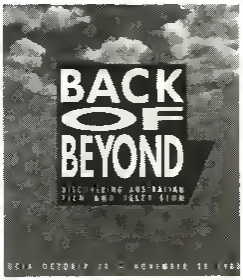

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FRINGE

SIGNIFICANT SOCIAL COMMENTARY, OR A PERVERSE WALLOW IN MINDLESS, SLEAZY SWILL? A HISTORY AND GUIDE, FEATURING THE MOST NOTABLE OF THE FAN MAGAZINES THAT (SOMETIMES) COLOURFULLY AND (ALWAYS) DEVOTEDLY COVER EXPLOITATION CINEMA...

"CONTRARY TO THE LIES OF THE ESTABLISHMENT MEDIA, THE UNDERGROUND PRESS DIDN'T DIE LIKE A FAD AT THE CLOSE OF THE SIXTIES, IN FACT, IT GREW LIKE A MONSTER, COVERING A WIDER RANGE OF SUBJECT MATTER THAN EVER BEFORE..."

JOHN HOLMSTROM

IN 1971 I emerged from a primary school excursion to a newly opened suburban public library with three important objects Besides one of those first tangible pieces of self identification – a plastic library card – I also took home two books which proved to be very influential at this formative stage. They can be a similar aid to this guide and partial history of fan and underground writings on exploitation cinema

Playpower was largely disowned by its author Richard Neville after he co authored a biography in the late Seventies on multiple murderer Charles Sobhraj – the book actively encouraged young Westerners to travel the Asian byways and hippy trails of the East where Sobhraj operated Despite this, it still retains great value because of its straight documentation and its descriptive insights into the mechanics of the underground press In a chapter entitled "The Guerilla Press" Neville states, "The underground press is a goldmine (or gravel pit) of news and opinion that can never find its way into straight media because it transcends the self imposed bounds of good taste or infringes covenants of libel, blasphemy, obscenity, sedition or veracity "[1]

Almost two decades later this observation is still relevant to the present state of the underground, alternative, independent, fan or guerilla press – whatever term you prefer In a recent article that chronicles this situation, journalist John Holmstrom writes, "Contrary to the lies of the establishment media, the underground press didn't die like a fad at the close of the Sixties, In fact, it grew like a monster, covering a wider range of subject matter than ever before "[2] If anything Holmstrom is perhaps slightly understating the current size and diversity of the underground press This becomes apparent especially in relation to writings on film and, more importantly video Typically, Holmstrom keeps the focus of his article on music based publications – records are still a durable and easily accessible cultural currency/commodity despite the general advance of video as we rapidly approach the Nineties Even at the age of 10, I recognized a certain disparity between 'what occurred' and what finally made it to press, a view *Playpower* substantially confirmed

A major gap became obvious to me between my predilection for horror/sci fi/fantasy/action films and what was in the daily newspapers Brought up on a steady diet of the Hammer/Toho/Tigon/Amicus and American International productions that lit Australian television and cinema screens in the late Sixties and early Seventies, I found it difficult to locate any writings on these products, let alone ones that might approach their subject matter even semi seriously Where was the print equivalent of Deadly Earnest, for example?

Of course the most widely circulated magazine ever to be solely devoted to the most visible form of the exploitation cinema, Forrest J Ackerman's *Famous Monsters of Filmland*, did exist then, as it had since February of 1958, but with its constant stream of puns and a general reading level well below that of even a daily newspaper it never really appealed to me Also, *Famous Monsters of Filmland* consistently supported and relied on the Universal horror films of the Thirties, hailing them as 'classics' Although this view is not uncommon, the fact remained that *Famous Monsters of Filmland* often ignored European and other foreign genre products and never really strived to present any sort of contemporary viewing experience except in its letters page. This wasn't exactly the case with the other book I managed to pack into my junk filled schoolbag that day, which turned out to be a work of far greater depth and use

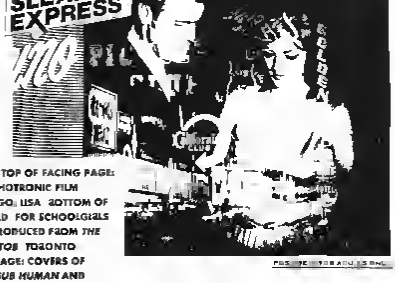
Even though *Horror Movies: An Illustrated Survey*, by the late Carlos Clarens, ended with a chapter concentrating on Godard's *Alphaville* (an inclusion which shouldn't surprise people) it did provide one of the first highly detailed and analytical accounts of the horror genre to be written in English3 Within its pages Clarens presented a non hysterical and extremely articulate overview of the development of the horror genre that mixed hard industrial information with an implicit understanding of international film culture and the literary roots of the genre While this may sound like a recipe for some detached academic work, it wasn't Clarens even acknowledged the limitations of film theory in his introduction stating, "Most movies have their own voices, and none of them was created to support a single aesthetic or theory "[4] Above all, Clarens comes across as a person who actually liked horror films and, more significantly knew exactly what he liked about them and how to express it

In the meantime, while *Horror Movies: An Illustrated Survey* was presumably elevating the discussion and appreciation of the horror film into new critical and cultural circles, on a grass roots level the consumers and fans of horror were becoming organized *Famous Monsters of Filmland* and its more sophisticated rival *Castle of Frankenstein* both assisted the institutionalization of horror film fandom in the USA, owing to their mass circulation print runs and support of fan conventions in their wake several mimeographed and other cheaply produced magazines began to spring up in the early Sixties Of this group one still exists today Originally titled *Gore Creatures* but now known as *Midnight Marquee*, Gary J Svelha's product epitomizes both the spirit of persistence needed to keep such a publication going and also the format which many other fanzines emulate In September 1988 *Midnight Marquee* appeared in a huge 208 page, squarebound 25th anniversary issue that included among its usual segments of film/book reviews, letters and essays (all illustrated with rare stills, ad material reproductions and excellent art contributions) a comprehensive and personal issue by issue history of *Midnight Marquee* written by its editor

By the early Seventies a number of the nascent fanzines that had made the transition from mimeograph to offset printing managed to find their way into Melbourne via the shop that would become a focal point for film enthusiasts in general – The Space Age Bookshop You could find issues of *Photon*, *The Monster Times* and *Bizarre* among the latest copies of such above ground superhero comics as *Superman*, *Spiderman*, *Daredevil*, and the more obviously genre oriented comics like *Creepy*, *Eerie* and *Vampirella* – which were going through a boom period then, largely owing to the artwork that came out of underground publications of the Sixties and with which exploitation film fanzines have held a long relationship All of this contributed to the blending of fan writing with more mainstream productions in both form and content

Photon was produced out of New York and was a supreme example of these circumstances Published on 8 ½" x 11" glossy stock, each issue averaged 48 pages and contained thoughtful and critical writings on a variety of subjects and topics On the whole *Photon* had an emphasis on hard information and besides interviews and/or articles on previously overlooked filmmakers and films it included lengthy checklists and filmographies on subjects ranging from vampires and zombies in the cinema to the Fu Manchu and Invisible Man films *Photon* was not above printing large corrections or additions to these lists which distanced itsomewhat from other more professional publications, but you could hardly tell this by simply looking at it, despite its obvious lack of advertising *Photon* eventually succumbed to the fate of many self published ventures that rely on sales by subscription and the simple love of its writers and contributors for the genre and disappeared in 1977 after 14 years and 27 issues

Two other important and interesting publications that began in the early Seventies were *Cinefantastique* and *The Monster Times* *Cinefantastique* had led a previous life in the late Sixties as a mimeo



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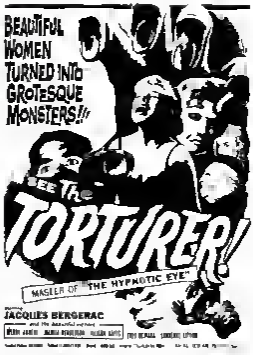
graph production under the same title. Prior to this its creator and publisher Frederick S. Clarke had been the editor for one issue of the even lesser known *Garden Ghouls Gazette*. When *Cinefantastique*, the offset printed version, first saw the light of day in 1970 it appeared in a form similar to that of *Photon* but with a stated commitment and intent to cover the wider field of 'fantastic' cinema. This included the then other popular generic area of science fiction. That flexible editorial policy allowed *Cinefantastique* to navigate the relatively barren horror era of the mid 1970s and to ride the wave of success and popularity created by *Star Wars*, which in turn led to its establishment as the completely professional (albeit soulless) magazine that it is today. Still, its earlier fan-produced editions did provide some passionate and articulate writings that included one particular freewheeling interview with the director of *Night of the Living Dead*, George Romero, when more mainstream film publications were still reeling from the film.[3]

The Monster Times, which was a professional bi-monthly tabloid newspaper from its inception in 1972, was perhaps a little ahead of its time. Its understanding and feeling for all areas of popular culture saw it mix comic art with film and TV coverage of all levels and generic types in a way that didn't pander to any particular common denominator except for that which could only be described as the general appreciation of trash culture. It alerted many people to the work of Herschell Gordon Lewis (in an article later re-hashed in *Fangoria*.) and unfortunately only had a short life span of four years.

As is usually the case, the volume of film culture items – and I'm including both professionally produced magazines and the more cheaply manufactured fanzines here – will only reflect the film product on the market at any given time. So with the commercial success of *Star Wars* in 1977, followed by *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, the production of horror films on a large scale was temporarily displaced and suddenly the number of science fiction based publications aimed at a mass market increased dramatically. Magazines such as *Starlog*, *Fantastic Films*, *Questar* and the British production of the Marvel Comics Group's *Starburst* all came into being between 1976 and 1979. With the exception of *The House of Hammer* and the perennial *Famous Monsters of Filmland* (which gave a lot of space to science fiction during this time) only a few one off and very dedicated fan publications remained devoted to the horror genre.

However, with the release of *Halloween* in 1978 and *Friday the 13th* in 1980 a new group of horror film fans emerged. Recent developments in quick reproduction technology (photocopiers) – at first utilized by a different yet not unrelated sub culture movement, the fans of punk – made available a form in which opinions, artwork and graphics could be presented and exchanged. Another development in technology – the video cassette recorder – was to have a great effect on certain areas of film culture from the early 1980s onwards, but not before the launch of yet another horror film magazine attempting to gain a wide audience.

Fangoria, or *Fantastica* as it was originally titled, came into being late in 1979 as a sister publication to *Starlog* and the real science-based *Future* magazine. Under the banner of "Monsters, Aliens and Bizarre Creatures" its immediate directions seemed unclear for the first few years. Only a strong editorial stance against censorship and the ability to print colour stills depicting the most graphic scenes of celluloid violence – *that* it prided itself on – really differentiated it from any previous horror film publication. Slowly it came together to give coverage to the slew of films, produced by major Hollywood studios and selected independents, which employed prosthetics and other advances in make-up and special effects design. Its icons became special effects technicians and the handful of contemporary directors who found fame within the horror genre. Its nostalgia for older horror films never stretched beyond the 1950s monster movies, with the exceptions of former film producer Alex Gordon's regular column. It did finally manage to raise the concerns of some parental groups but only long after its original editor left it and then it became a relatively innocuous collection of recycled publicity material.



In marked contrast to *Fangoria* and to just about any film based publications that had gone before them, three fanzines that would each shape and influence the underbelly of film culture for years to come began production in 1980.

Bill Landis's *Sleazoid Express* began its life as a single-page typed newsletter that documented the screenings in one of the world's seediest clusters of cinemas on New York's 42nd Street. In the beginning Landis was quite prepared to report on the myriad horror films that played around town and to utilize the newsletter approach to advertise and support the screening of films he organized in places like Club 57 and the Mudd Club. But he quickly grew bored with horror and the films he screened such as Radley Metzger's *The Lickerish Quartet* and *The Laughing Woman* gave an indication of the direction *Sleazoid Express* would take. By the time it had increased the number of pages in 1983 Landis saw fit to eloquently denounce what were perceived by gore fans to be highwater marks in early Eighties cinema. Under the heading "Exploitation Cancer," Landis wrote: "*Evil Dead* is just the latest model in the invasion of exploitation by a nerd brained, stamp collector mentality which has particularly involved itself in gore.

"Obsession with special effects, blockheadedly judging laughability without comprehending its aesthetic basis and praising gore for gore's sake are all examples of this. It's like these type of fans are now picking up cameras. Raimi and Frank Henenlotter certainly fall in this category. Henenlotter's *Basket Case* is an appallingly overpraised, self consciously low budget, 16mm blow-up horror movie about a young man's freakish Siamese twin murdering the doctors that separated them. The amateurism of this production is as uninteresting as it is inauthentic throughout, from its unknown cast to its lumberingly calculated gore scenes to its cutesy monster movie concept of an 'original' plot."[4]

In an article about fanzines that was published in *Film Comment* in 1985 Jack Barth praised the work of Landis and placed *Sleazoid Express* on the top of his list of recommendations.[5] Landis eventually teamed up with Jimmy McDonough to further document the porn industry and its patrons, participants and creators. Later issues of *Sleazoid Express* were presented in an offset printed tabloid version. Combining some of the wildest and mostly unbelievable advertising materials available with lucid and always intelligent commentaries *Sleazoid Express* was/is one of the most vital pieces of work to ever tackle the subject of pornography. Like many of the porn cinemas of 'The Deuce', however, *Sleazoid Express* also seems to have faded away.

Rick Sullivan's *Gore Gazette* immediately made a place for itself amongst a local and international network of sleaze film enthusiasts. Now, nearly 10 years later, this three page photostat production hasn't had to alter its look or style to keep those subscription cheques rolling in. Basically the *Gore Gazette* is, as it proclaims, a guide to Horror, Exploitation and Sleaze in the New York area. Writing deftly at a pace that matches many of the gore and action films he reveals in, Sullivan is not beyond taking time out to lament the closure of local flea-pits – even exhorting his readers to only use their VCRs for rare stuff and to go out and attend the ageing and ever diminishing number of grindhouses of the inner city. Every *Gore Gazette* contains on average 12 brisk reviews of mainstream and less commercial fare. All are each

ILLUSTRATION BY MAURICE VELLEKOOP. REPRODUCED FROM *THE TRASH COMPACTOR*.

imbued with a feel for and encyclopedic knowledge of the genre that often makes them more entertaining than the films themselves

Many fanzines exist to fill gaps in areas of film culture that are left untouched by mainstream critics and even some supposedly specialist film publications Arguably none have done it more successfully or comprehensively than Michael Weldon's *Psychotronic Encyclopedia of Film* It is not a fanzine, but a book that is very much the product of work on a fanzine and as such contains the credits and synopses for over 3 000 films that you are likely to encounter, but unlikely to find in Halliwell's *Film Guide* or Leonard Malon's latest reference work Originally *Psychotronic* was a hand lettered, photostat fanzine principally designed as a weekly guide to films of all types that were dumped on New York TV stations After 53 issues Weldon dropped the fanzine to work on the book Just recently Weldon has resurfaced with a new 48 page magazine that takes in many aspects of trash culture and is called *Psychotronic Video*

There has been an explosion in the production of exploitation film fanzines over the past few years So many have come into existence that it would be impossible to detail them all at any length What follows then is a rather biased but current listing of the most interesting,innovative and/or important ones that I have actually sighted There is also a secondary listing of contact addresses for the ones with small circulations that you aren't likely to come across down at the local 7 11

As its title suggests, *Deep Red* is single minded about its cinematic tastes Produced in Hollywood but published in New York by Fantaco Enterprises Inc , *Deep Red* has come a long way since its first issue in December 1987 Under its editor – author, artist and unabashed gorehound Chas Balun – *Deep Red* has developed into a showcase for the writing and artistic talents of many horror film fans worldwide With a keen interest in fostering an international 'blood brotherhood', good distribution, gory full colour covers and an ability to report on films even *Fangoria* wouldn't handle, it is no wonder *Deep Red* has become popular

Across the Atlantic, a 16 page magazine called *Shock X Press* emerged from London in 1985 to announce, "If you want serious analyses of the latest big buck megahit, look elsewhere," and promptly began its investigation into exploitation cinema It soon expanded to 36 pages and has managed to attract a stable of writers that includes some of the more established professionals alongside editors of some of the world's better fanzines This set high writing and research standards unmatched by few other publications of its type Its location has also allowed it to make interesting explorations into the work of more obscure European filmmakers Recent issues have included features on Jorg Buttgereit (the maker of *Nekromantik*), Joey D'Amato, Anthony Balch, Riccardo Freda, Larry Buchanan and *The Faces of Death* series.

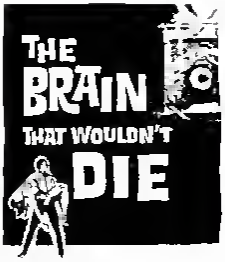
Samhain is another magazine from England. Launched in November 1986, *Samhain* offers news, reviews, a regular fanzine column, a free collectors' market and features on some of the more well known faces and makers of horror Samhain has also demonstrated progress in its production standards, is published bi-monthly, and has recently included articles on Hammer films, Screaming Lord Sutch and a large checklist of Italian filmmakers' pseudonyms

Subversion is the name of the game with two publications The first, *Film Threat*, the magazine for the jaded moviegoer, doesn't restrict itself to horror though it features a regular horror film review column Instead it presents a wider cultural perspective, fitting in everything from the Cinema of Transgression to Jello Biafra between its slick covers Utilizing techniques like the reproduction of letters as they were written, turning letters into articles and using punkzine layouts, *Film Threat*'s editor Christian Gore assembles it all with an attitude that confronts perceptions of what a magazine could be *Film Threat* is really out there on the cutting edge

Much the same can be said for *Pandemonium*, which is put out by writer Jack Stevenson, also a regular contributor to *Film Threat* Originally he put out a one sheet newsletter called *Psycho Splatter* that besides including a few reviews of mainstream horror films seemed more like an excuse to run, in serial form, an interview he had conducted with John Waters. In 1985 he packaged that interview, along with one with Al Goldstein (editor of *Screw*) and correspondence from William Burroughs, Charles Bukowski and others, and published it all under the title of *Pandemonium* This project, only intended as a one shot, grew legs, and soon *Pandemonium 2* (The Cult film, Killers and Attempted Assassins issue) appeared Described by Stevenson as "an experiment, a challenge, an entertainment, a tribute – part psychology class, part carnival sideshow" , it included original correspondence with German filmmaker Rosa von Praunheim, as well as Charles Manson, John Wayne Gacy and John Hinkley Jr It also has interviews with Divine, Mink Stole and other members of the John Waters stock company

Subhuman is a small, folded A4 photostat fanzine of 16 pages that is put together by the husband and wife team of Dawn and Cecil Doyle It describes itself as the fanzine of eccentric film and video culture but perhaps 'eclectic' would be more fitting, Since 1986 *Subhuman* has unearthed some of the most interesting writings on trash culture that go a long way towards undoing the narrow implications of that term Some notable articles have included 'Films by Women', which compares Diane Keaton's *Heaven* to *Shocking Asia*, an in depth interview with a porn cinematographer, a piece on the Mr Ed fan club, an article on James Bond related porn films and many reviews of films and videos wrapped in some of the most eye catching graphics

Small press fanzines rely heavily on video, especially the more obscure ones that tend to spend most of their time gathering dust on video shop shelves Two of the best examples of this type of fanzine are *Ecco* and *Hi-Tech Terror* *Ecco*, produced by a team of two, provides a rundown on recent releases but also devotes its two A3 pages to a central theme The release in America of war propaganda documentaries gave much material for a string of issues in this particularly well written and handsomely presented zine *High Tech Terror* is a small, folded A4 zine of two pages that eschews graphics but, like *Subhuman*, has collected a large coterie of writers as it continues its relentless search for obscure horror videos Titles they have reviewed include *A Polish Vampire in Burbank*, *Crazy Fat Ethel 2*, *The Freak Maker*, *Gore Met Zombie Chief from Hell* *Horror Rises from the Tomb*, *Sometimes Aunt Martha Does Dreadful Things*, and over 200 others in nearly 40 issues



So far I have only spoken of American and English publications, but Australia has several fanzines in operation at the moment *Crimson Celluloid* is Australia's longest running horror film fanzine It began as a one sheet giveaway newsletter in 1985 and since then has been through a number of incarnations In May 1988 it appeared in a slick, offset printed digest edition in order to increase its circulation beyond the handful of specialist bookstores and independent record shops willing to sell a fanzine By the time you read this *Crimson Celluloid* will be on the streets again with its biggest edition yet, which will include interviews with Roberta Findlay and the maker of *I Spit on Your Grave*, Meir Zarchi

Mondo Gore comes from Queensland, and is a stapled A4 three sheet photostat production It is basically a review zine that devotes its space to all the cinema and video releases that actually make it past the Queensland Board of Review, which goes a long way towards explaining its size *Mondo Gore* also incorporates a music component, and is available free of charge

Fatal Visions is my idea of accurately and comprehensively documenting violent media and trash culture in Melbourne It is 28 pages long and appears on a quarterly basis

Lastly, there is *Slimetime* from New York This eight page, A4 review zine is one of the most consistently entertaining and informative you could find Its editor, Steve Puchalski, says that "unlike a lot of today's film zines, *Slimetime* doesn't try to appeal to only one specific group of moviegoers We cover a wide cross section from the past and present from Herschell Gordon Lewis and Inishiro Honda to Nicolas Roeg and Russ Meyer *Slimetime* can be taken as a twisted sociological commentary on the underbelly of American entertainment, or a humorous h'l rag that wallows in mindless, sleazy swill It all depends on the tastes of the reader "

A LIST OF CONTACT ADDRESSES:

A TASTE OF BILE P O Box 7150, Waco TX 76714-7150 USA **COLD SWEAT** 48 St Paul's Crescent, London NW19TN **CRIMSON CELLULOID** 312 Great North Rd , Five Dock, Australia 2046 **DONOLINA** P O Box 115, Moro IL 62067, U.S.A. **ECCO** P O Box 65742 Washington D C 20035, U S A **FATAL VISIONS** P O Box 133 Northcote, Australia 3070 **GORE GAZETTE** 469 Hazel St ,Clifton NJ 07011 U S A **GRIND** P O Box 32, Old Bridge, NJ 08857 U S A **HI-TECH TERROR** Box 5367, Kingwood TX 77325 U S A **IT'S ONLY A MOVIE** P O Box 14683 Chicago IL 60614 0683, U S A **MONDO GORE** G P O Box 2757 Brisbane Australia 4001 **PANDEMONIUM** 171 Auburn St Suite II Cambridge MA02139 U S A **SAMHAIN** 19 Elm Grove Rd , Topsham, Exeter Devon EX3 OEQ U K **SLIMETIME** 1108 East Genesee St. #103 Syracuse NY 13210, U S A **SPLATTER** 2/396 Elmore Rd , Box Hill North Australia 3129 **SUBHUMAN** 1509 W St Mary Blvd , Lafayette, LA 70506 U S A **THE TRASH COMPACTOR** 235 College Street, Suite 108, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5T R5 **VIOLENT LEISURE** 22 Marama Ave, Epsom, Auckland, New Zealand

NOTES

1 Neville, Richard *Playpower*, Paladin, London 1971, pp 126
2 Holmstrom, John The view from the bottom", *High Times*, No 143, July 1987, pp 52
3 See also Douglas, Drake, *Horror* Macmillan New York, 1966 It is also interesting to note that the French with their rabid post WWII film culture were more on top of things and influential in the sphere of exploitation cinema culture than other peoples. *Famous Monsters of Filmland* was directly inspired by a French publication called *Cinema 57* that devoted an entire issue to 'Le Fantastique' In the early 60's *Cahiers du Cinema* noted the work of Herschell Gordon Lewis and later in the early 1970s independent French publications with the ability to publish the gonest stills in full colour had more than a passing influence on the American based *Fangoria*
4 Clarens, Carlos *Horror Movies: An Illustrated Survey*, Secker and Warburg Ltd , London 1968, pp 14
5 Scott, Tony 'Romero An interview with the director of *Night of the Living Dead*' *Cinefantastique*, Vol 2, No 3, Winter 1973, pp 8 15
6 Landis Bill, *Sleazoid Express*, Vol. 3, No 2, March 1983, pp 2
7 Barth, Jack 'Fauxines' *Film Comment*, April 1985, pp 25

An Interview by Patrick Maher

RIGHTS, REWRITES AND THE $8 MILLION KISS

Screenwriter FRANK PIERSON *at work*

ABOVE: AL PACINO AND HOSTAGE IN *DOG DAY AFTERNOON*

American screenwriter Frank Pierson, whose credits include CAT BALLOU, COOL HAND LUKE and DOG DAY AFTERNOON, is an endless source of anecdotes, opinions, advice and warnings on the subject of writing screenplays. DOG DAY AFTERNOON, which was directed by Sidney Lumet and starred Al Pacino, John Cazale and Chris Sarandon, is a script which clearly demonstrates his approach to the craft. Based on the story of John Wojtowicz, who held up a New York Chase Manhattan Bank to try to get the funds to give his lover a sex change, the film showed how a bungled bank job and a bungled life became a media spectacle attended by television cameras and thousands of onlookers. For Pierson the film meant headaches, research, rewrites, fast talking, fast writing, and an Academy Award.

GETTING THE PROJECT

PATRICK MAHER. *How did you come to write* Dog Day Afternoon?

FRANK PIERSON. Al Pacino's agents noticed that the guy who did it looked like Al Pacino. They went to John Wojtowicz in prison and made an agreement with him whereby Warner Brothers would pay him $7,500 plus a percentage of the film to be agreed upon later. $7,500 was the price of a sex change operation in New York City at that time. The money was paid to him and he instantly gave it to Leon, (Chris Sarandon in the movie) who became Liz Eadon, courtesy of Warner Brothers. Warner Brothers put up the money to hire a screenwriter. They came to me and asked me to write it. After *Cool Hand Luke* I guess I had a reputation as a writer of hard nosed action, more than anything else. A criminal mind? I read the material and said, "Yes, there is a movie in this."

RESEARCH

How extensive was the research you had to do?

I had the benefit of literally weeks of tapes and research material that had already been done before. All I had to do was sit there and digest it. I went back and reinterviewed most of the key people. After that I could interpret what I

was hearing on the tapes, or seeing on the transcripts much more easily because I had already met the person and could visualize who was saying the words I knew their style and tone and tempo, and their attitude towards things – whether they were kind of angry and threatening or whatever Once I have got hold of the characters in my mind and I can understand the general shape of the story, that's where I start

I spent a lot of time with Leon, the homosexual wife in the story He/she was one of the most hilariously obscene people I think I have ever met in my life He was as a man, is now as a woman, the kind of person who cannot ask for a cigarette without putting some obscene spin on the question. In the original writing I used a lot of that material

WRITING

By now, having all the interviews and re interviews and all the research material, tapes and paper work in hand – which weighed 65 or 70 pounds altogether – I got seriously down to the business of writing the screenplay I knew I was going to tell the story in the time span of the real event, so it would begin with the robbers coming into the bank, the robbing of the bank, and it would go right to the end at Kennedy Airport with Sal (John Cazale) being shot and Sonny being carted away and going off to gaol So I wasn't presented with what is usually my first writing decision, which is finding a first image, and finding my way to a final image that defines the difference between the two, which is the story

GETTING TO KNOW THE CHARACTERS

Dog Day Afternoon is about a character, John Wojtowicz, who became the character we called Sonny in the picture. It became clear to me that I wanted to tell the story from his point of view, so I had to find some way of getting into it, so that we knew what it was that he was up to It is important to understand what he is about and he is such a paradox it was very difficult to identify him as a character

I never got to meet him, but all of his loved ones, especially those who were closest to him, gave an utterly different view of who Sonny was They were all angry and irritated and disappointed with him in one way or another, but they all described him in different ways

This confusion over the character began to freeze me up I could not discover what drove the story or him. I didn't know how to write him I've got him in the bank and the policeman comes to the front door How does he react to that situation? I need to know that before I can write the scene

I resorted to the process which I have evolved for myself over the years for solving story problems, which is just simply to ask the simplest, most fundamental kinds of questions of the characters involved in the action I literally make lists of questions to ask Questions like, "What is going on here? Who is he? Why does he do these things? Why does everybody describe him as an utterly different kind of character? What is the common denominator? Is there one? If so, what is it that runs through all these things?"

I realized finally it was the relationship they each had with him that was the common factor In every case they loved John and he loved them But that opened the way to perceive something else Not only had all these people loved him at one time or another, but they all had a sense that they had been betrayed by him

So now we are beginning to see what is in common amongst all those disparate statements, and I am beginning to ask myself, "Why? What happened in these relationships? Specifically, why does his heterosexual wife feel betrayed by him?"

I didn't even have to go back and re interview her, I found it in the interview that I conducted with her She weighs about 300 lbs and somewhere buried in all this torrent of language she said, "He wouldn't let me go on a diet because if I was going on a diet it was admitting that I was fat And he said, 'No you are not fat ' And I said, 'Johnny, I am fat I'm a fat, fat woman! Look at me, why can't you accept that?' He was saying, 'You are not fat, it's all right I love you because you are really and truly a thin person, you are not fat. Don't say you are fat '"

I began to realize that the path through his character was that he simply would refuse to recognize the reality of the situation His way of following through on a wish of hers to be thin, was to simply deny she was fat, which was so unreal that she was unable to diet because that would be a violation of his insistence that she wasn't fat in the first place, and so all that happened was she got fatter and fatter, and angrier and angrier That's where her sense of betrayal came from I began to find that there was a similar strain in all of his other relationships It was as though what was embodied in all of them was a promise

His form of loving was to make a promise to people to her that she wasn't fat, to Leon that he was going to get a sex change operation, the promise to his mother that he was going to hold down a regular job All these promises were made and all of them were violated

I asked myself another simple question. "What is the nature of the promise or commitment that he makes to them?" In every case he was going to make them whole. Carmen was going to be thin, Leon was going to be happy as a woman, his mother was going to be happy

A pattern emerged He was terribly loving in a nurturing but immature way, and also very compulsive about it In a loving relationship he would take these people over and promise in a sense to make them whole Of course he was never able to do that, but he was very persuasive at the same time and they all believed him and that's why they loved him

Then I knew what I needed to know to write the character, because you could say, "O K. In any given situation, this guy is going to try to do the nice thing " He is going to do everybody else's business for them, and for the first time I had a clear understanding of how to write the character

I could write the scenes in the bank now, because I knew how he would respond to almost any given situation that he would get into After that time it was very easy going. But it all derived from finding the key to that character

PUTTING THE AUDIENCE IN GOOD HANDS

The moment that he comes into the bank, when we realize we this thing is not your usual bank robbery, was a very important moment to spend time on, reflecting on how you give the audience permission to laugh.

It is a critically important thing, when you are dealing with highly melodramatic or tragic situations, which have a comedic side to them Audiences need to know that it is all right to laugh, otherwise they can feel very uncomfortable

There was a piece I found in the general research that I used It was from an FBI report of another bank robbery in which the robber comes into the bank and he sticks the gun in the head teller's face and uses the usual obscene dialogue, "Give me your money or I'll blow your fuckin' guts all over the goddamn wall," and so on, and she, just by sheer reflex action, pushed the little triangular sign that says "NEXT WINDOW PLEASE" I stuck that piece of business in for the laugh and because it is a joke on Sonny It says incompetence and right away we know something about him

I LITERALLY MAKE LISTS OF QUESTIONS TO ASK. QUESTIONS LIKE, "WHAT IS GOING ON HERE? WHO IS HE? WHY DOES HE DO THESE THINGS? WHY DOES EVERYBODY DESCRIBE HIM AS AN UTTERLY DIFFERENT KIND OF CHARACTER? WHAT IS THE COMMON DENOMINATOR? IS THERE ONE? IF SO, WHAT IS IT THAT RUNS THROUGH ALL THESE THINGS?"...

We got to dress rehearsal of the scene. The rifle was contained in a 'long stem roses' box which was wrapped with satin ribbon, and every time Pacino tried to get that rifle out of the box it got tied up in the ribbon That was the laugh and it worked It was totally spontaneous It served the same purpose the sign served Now my problem was to talk Sidney out of using the sign, because we couldn't do both You can only do one joke there, otherwise it gets to be too much

So I went over to Sidney and said, "You are going to ditch the business with the sign, aren't you?" He said, "Hell, why?" I said, "You don't want to do two things " Sidney said, "I know, it is getting a little jumbled " "Take it out " I said "But you thought of it," he answered. I replied, "I don't care The only point I care about is that we get a laugh at this point, because it gives permission, it tells the audience what it is that is happening to them, very early on in the picture "

The important thing to me about beginning a film is not looking for that melodramatic hook, or some event that is going to anchor us or tell us what the plot is going to be The issue is, you have got to do something on screen The most important thing is to make something happen, and preferably immediately No matter what it is – even a note of music It says is this is the way we are going to spend the next two hours of out lives together

If you have got the right audience, they are saying, "Ah, now I understand " But if they are mystified about what is happening, and not knowing if it is a comedy and thinking they don't like it, you're alienating them, but as long as you let them know that they are in good hands, it is going to be all right

OUTLINING

I eventually worked out about a 70 page outline for a screenplay that was going to be 115 120 pages In that was contained every major scene that finally ended up in the picture, and an awful lot of stuff that did not.

I then plotted out all of the action I had already solved my principal character's motivation problem, what he was going to be like, before I started writing the screenplay

This is what I generally do and not everyone works this way [Screenwriters] Tom Rickman and Alvin Sargent, for example, just sit down and let the scenes come Alvin just keeps on writing scenes at random, anything that comes into his head that seems to bear some relationship, and he keeps putting them in a box until he has got a big stack of scenes, then he takes them out and sort of moves them around to see if he can assemble them in some form that will make a story I once read a first draft of his that was over 2,000 pages long Needless to say he didn't turn that into the studio

Once I have found my characters in this way, I can work out what the scenes I need For example, take the entrance of his homosexual wife Leon is brought in from the hospital where he has tried to commit suicide, which was the reason why John, the original character, tobbed the bank in the first place I didn't want the audience to know that I was trying deliberately to play a trick on them so they don't know anything about the homosexuality of the other

man Whenever he speaks about the wife I want the audience to think that what he is talking about is his heterosexual wife, who we have seen already

How I would introduce the theme of the wife was all very carefully calculated, page by page, scene by scene I carefully structured the dialogue so that without being artificial about it, the ambiguity never gets explained When the cops say, "We are bringing your wife down," he knows what wife they are referring to, and reacts with disgust We think it is because of the big silly fat fool It is only later that we learn it is because Leon (Ernie – Chris Sarandon) embarrasses him

That was structured in the most mechanical way, so that I could spring the surprise as the second act climax The moment that Leon is brought on the audience, the cops and the hostages all see at the same time that the wife who is coming down is actually a man So that is all mechanical plotting That is what I do in the process of the whole outlining, getting those things in order It is management of time and information, because when we tell a story we know the ending but the audience must not, ever

You could look at the working out of a story or a screenplay as planning the leaking of information. You find out just a little bit more, and a little bit more all along the way

FIRST DRAFT

When I start to write the first draft I forget about the outline I try not to go back and look at it In fact what I do is make an outline of the outline What we call in the States, and maybe you have them here too, a 'one line' It simply says, Scene 1, Sonny and Sal go into the bank Scene 2, Sal goes to the bank manager Scene 3 & 4 – just one line descriptions the simplest things so that I don't forget something and skip past it, because I like to write sequentially Tom Rickman* and Alvin Sargent refuse to discuss screenwriting with me on this basis They will go around and any day they feel funny or sad, look for a funny or sad thing to write that day I can't do that I have to build it architecturally, bit by bit, as I go along I like to ram through to the end of it as quickly as I can and not get hung up Alvin and Tom will not walk away from a scene or a moment until they have got it as perfect as they can make it, until it is fully realized emotionally

WHEN WE TELL A STORY WE KNOW THE ENDING BUT THE AUDIENCE MUST NOT, EVER. YOU COULD LOOK AT THE WORKING OUT OF A STORY OR A SCREENPLAY AS PLANNING THE LEAKING OF INFORMATION. YOU LET OUT JUST A LITTLE BIT MORE, AND A LITTLE BIT MORE ALL ALONG THE WAY.

I reach a point where I say, "I know something here has to happen, I know the crux of it is that 'so and so' says this to 'so and so', and that has to be done in this scene, but I can't figure out how to do it now " So I bypass that one and go onto the next scene By the time I get to the end I have the information and feeling I have learned so much more about my characters and my story and the world in which they live, that the probability is that the ideas to fill in that blank scene are going to appear spontaneously, then I don't have to waste time staring into space It is not only wasting time It is really wasting energy to just sit there and it is very discouraging and dispirting as well, and I'm trying to become a happy writer instead of an unhappy one I just try to avoid as many of those stumbling places as I possibly can

EXPERIENCE

While you are on that point of craft, do you find that experience takes forward your strategies from one project to the next project, so you are using similar strategies, or do you change from job to job?

Writing every screenplay is a different experience In fact if there is anything that I have learned from a lifetime of experience is that somewhere along the line I will figure out how to write the screenplay But the process of writing it is also finding the way to write it Although I usually write outlines, sometimes I have worked without doing an outline first None of these rules is absolutely hard and fast, but I do know one thing is constant and I have grown a little cleverer about executing it over the years and that is to begin with knowing the character very well Knowing just what he will do in every circumstance Gradually that character will evolve his own story He will tell his own story to me

IMPROVISING CIRCUMSTANCES

Through these improvisations I put him into in all kinds of circumstances he takes on definite form If the worst comes to the worst, I can't even think of what he is going to do in the bank that morning I always write something I put something in that computer I will say "How will this guy have a fight? What if he's on a freeway and he honks his horn at somebody, and the guy runs him off the road and starts yelling at him What would he do in that situation?" Or "What if he gets arrested for smoking grass at some friend's apartment What will he do?" It is amazing how often even these kinds of aimless arbitrary improvisations will evolve into something that goes straight into the script

STANISLAVSKY APPLIED TO WRITING

If you have been involved in acting at all you will recognize that they are the equivalent of the Stanislavsky method, but it is simply applied to writing This is what actors do, in exploring the 'truth' of the character, and finding a way You improvise all kinds of scenes, in addition to the ones that are in the text that you are going to do It is a way of getting in touch with the character and exploring for the truth of it In this instance you can go a step further and use it to actually let the story evolve out of that. All of a sudden some wonderful scene will happen in your mind.

Instead of trying think of the story as events, you can think of the character in improvised situations and you begin to see the character beginning to come to life and act out things that you just grab It is not as though you are making it up, it is who the character is, acting it out for you

And the character is always seeking his own resolution then?

Exactly! Because the dramatic action is driven by the will of the character The character has a will to do something, and he "does something" We must always remember that these are texts to be performed They are not a literary event that happens on the page It is also significant that we call them 'actors' We don't call them orators, or singers, or speakers, we call them 'actors' That's what it is, acting It is the action that we can photograph It is the only thing you have to work with

ALLOWING FOR SPONTANEITY

Do you find that after having written your outline, as you are writing your first draft that changes in some of your characters have taken place in your mind and this makes you write something quite different?

That's why I write the one line outline So I can remind myself of the simple sequence of scenes and forget the detailed outline The detailed outline is in my head somewhere, now I want to forget it and let the characters find their own way All of a sudden they are in a scene and somebody says something that is totally unexpected I didn't know he was going to say that

You suddenly realize that once he said that back in the second act, it doesn't work further on any more so you are going to have to take bits out and everything changes all the way through You have to allow yourself to be free to make those changes and adjustments, that's where the spontaneity of the story comes from Otherwise you can plod through with one goddamn scene after another Yeah, there are a lot of surprises along the way and you hope there are

I finished the first draft which was much more than a first draft in the sense that it probably took me maybe three weeks to just ram through, skipping through things that I couldn't think of, getting to the end of it, somehow

AN ARTIST'S SKETCH – SELECTING AND REJECTING

Then you can breathe a sigh of relief and you look at it like an artist doing a sketch It's a little analogous to a painter's first working of a canvas Some parts of it are probably complete and some are not The painter then works over it picking bits out here and there for attention. You go back over it and change things, change colours and so on

By the time I get the first draft in a condition to show to anybody it is probably more like the fourth or fifth draft, or the fourth or fifth time I had put it through the computer, starting with page one and going straight on through four or five times at the very least, and each time you get faster and faster, and more things are discovered You tighten it and great gobs of dialogue come out

Then the question is, when are you done with the first draft or any draft for that matter? And I don't know That is one of the hardest answers that I have to come to Again I think it bears some resemblance to painting It may have been Picasso who said that nothing is ever finished There is a time to just walk away from it and that's the best answer I can give I reach a certain point and I can't think of anything more to do with it and I know that there are some things in it that need fixing and things that make me unhappy, but I just can't think of anything more to do The rehearsals will find those things for me

I also have a circle of friends, most of them writers, some directors, with whom I trade screenplays I will give them to Sydney Pollack He will give me something of his We trade them around a lot amongst

our friends and you get a lot of good feedback from those really professional people who understand the mechanics and the structure of a screenplay

You can also use people who are not sophisticated in terms of storytelling or scriptwriting, because one of the difficulties about using professionals for this purpose is that they tend to come back to you with suggestions about how to rewrite your screenplay Writers that do this to me don't get to see my stuff again because it just doesn't help That is not what I want as a response

What I want is somebody who would point to something and say that they loved this in the first part but somewhere about in here it seems to go flat, and they may throw out a couple of suggestions to me I am not listening to the suggestions that they are making as a something to do, but I'm saying to myself, "If that's what they think the solution is, what is the problem they are defining for me?" Then I go looking for specific things You listen to them very carefully

But you can't expect somebody to sit down and study it with the intensity that you are putting into the writing of it, so you really must take their ideas as nothing more than just that, 'ideas' I try to get a couple of friends at least to read it before I do my final write-through on the first draft.

BOTTOM OF FACING PAGE: JOHN CAZALE IN *DOG DAY AFTERNOON*. RIGHT: SCENE OUTSIDE THE BANK, *DOG DAY AFTERNOON*

DIRECTOR, PRODUCER, ACTOR

Pacino was to New York One of the producers was also in New York and one of the other producers and I were in California Sidney Lumet was in London preparing *Murder on the Orient Express* We all had to fly to London with the screenplay, so we left Friday night or Saturday morning We got into the Dorchester Hotel on Saturday night and had a meeting with Lumet in his suite He said "What is the screenplay about?" He hadn't read it at this point! I was never able to articulate it with any kind of succinctness until this moment. It was after I wrote the screenplay, which is what I mean by the screenplay being the means by which you discover what the story truly is, and what it is about. The writing of it is the process of finding that out

I was astonished to hear what I heard myself saying to Sidney, which was, "It's a story about a magician who believes he has the magic power to fulfil people's goals and aspirations and dreams, but he does not have the power, so consequently he betrays and disappoints them and instead of getting back the love that he expects from them for having given them this great gift, he gets waves of anger and betrayal and one thing and another So he is constantly bewildered." Sidney said, "Jesus, I'd better read the screenplay"

So Sunday, the next morning, we met at breakfast and they were all sitting there with long, long faces and I said, "How did you like it?" One of the producers said, "Well, Al liked it so much that he just quit!" I said, "Is that true?" Pacino said "Look you have got to understand something, this is a wonderful screenplay, and I really want to do it and I am not bullshitting you about that but I've just finished *The Godfather Part II* If you had seen that you would know how infinitely depressed I am"

Pacino is an actor who tends to carry a role around with him, and if you remember that last image at the end of *Godfather II*, where he is sitting there and he has just had his own brother murdered, who was the last person on earth that he had any ties to, and his wife has left him and he has lost his children, and he has lost and destroyed everything in his life worth living for, and he is just sitting there, staring into space That was who I saw sitting in the Dorchester Hotel He said, "I can't work" I said, "Does it have anything to do with the homosexuality in the story" He said, "No, it is not that, I just can't work" So we got on an plane and flew back to our various cities I think we were in London altogether a little over 12 hours

In any case, what we did then was send the screenplay to Dustin Hoffman, and when Pacino heard it had gone to Dustin he asked to read it again, and declared himself back in again, so Sidney was hired again Hard work!

PRE-PRODUCTION

We all met in New York and I had a couple of script meetings with Lumet and the film editor, Dede Allen, who had already been hired She was very helpful and is very knowledgeable about writing, as a film editor really ought to be, because film editing is a form of writing It is like the last stage of writing the movie When you have got all those materials back you can still reorder the structure and change things You can make it play when it didn't play

WRITERS' INVOLVEMENT IN PRODUCTION

It is relatively rare in Hollywood for a writer to be so intimately involved in the production process as I was on *Dog Day* I had been on most of my pictures, because I forced my way in A more retiring or shy writer has a considerable amount of difficulty staying around They don't really want you around, but you find out where they are meeting and just show up and walk in, and they don't have enough guts to tell you to leave Once you are there they get comfortable that you are not going to be subversive and so on, and that you are really listening to them, but it can be very difficult. Make it clear that you are only there to help

Is this principally a learning experience for you for future use – to be there?
It is, because the whole process of making the film is one to me The screenwriter's work shouldn't end after the writing of the screenplay The learning experience is terribly important

The majority of screen writers in America have never actually seen the process They turn in the screenplay and do some re writes The next thing that happens is they get invited to the premiere or preview Then they look up there and say, "Why did they do that?" They have no way of knowing It is a terrible, terrible system So in order to write better, yes, intrude, get yourself in there But also do it because it ought to be at its best, a collaborative process

CASTING

Does this collaboration also extend to casting?
It is worth speaking about the impact of casting on writing A writer can have an important impact on casting – there is a mutual interdependence between casting and writing, For instance, the character of Sal, Pacino's partner in the bank, was played by John Cazale who was then about 35 years old I had written him to be played by a 14 or 15 year old kid, which in real life he was. This was important to me for this reason There is a moment when the Sonny character, at last fully realizes how morally corrupt, how horribly wrong his whole life, his whole existence has gone Somewhere in the back of his mind he knows this is the end for him There is a moment when he understands that this is the end of his life in a sense, and that this moment sums up the whole meaning of his life and it is meaningless – it's awful

I wanted that moment where you saw a man fully confront the fact that his life has been a total mistake in a sense One of the most important scenes in the film

I felt it would come in that very quiet moment when this kid (imagine being a 14 year-old kid) comes over to the Pacino character and sits down next to him and says "Sonny, you know back there when you told them about shooting the people and throwing the bodies out the front of the bank?"

And Sonny starts to say to him, "Sal, listen you don't have to worry about that, I'm not really going to do that," or something reassuring, because that's the nature of Sonny to be that way and he is doing it again Now imagine Sal cuts right across him and this fresh-faced kid is saying, "No, no, you don't worry about it I'll kill them and throw them out You won't have to do that" Then he realizes he has corrupted this innocent kid That was an exceedingly important thing for me That changed the whole complexion of the movie

So when we came right down to the casting sessions, Pacino was the one who controlled that Sidney had very little to do with the casting Pacino staffs his movies with his friends Most of them are very good but nonetheless he controls that He says, "I want John Cazale to do this" I said, "Look, I think John is absolutely marvellous, but I am totally against it and I want for this reason that I will describe, the 14 year old." He said, "John Cazale could do that" I said, "No, wait a minute Al, look at the difference There is no way that John Cazale could be innocent In this situation he is going to come across as a homicidal maniac, which is threatening It pushes the plot along, it works for the story, but it undercuts a value which I think is important to me and the story" He said, "I agree with you. Let's see if we can't find a 15 year-old kid to play this role"

He went out and tried – every 15 year-old kid who had the right accent, anywhere between Boston and Washington D C was brought in and interviewed for the role by Al. But very early on you realized that none of these kids, no matter – you could have brought in Olivier as a 15 year old, he was not going to get that role. Pacino was nice enough to me to go through the motions, but he wasn't going to find a 15 year old I gave up on it, you can only fight so far I found that that was a very substantial writing value that went out of the picture, because of a casting decision, without a word being changed

REHEARSALS

They started rehearsals in September, a little over a year away from when I actually started writing the screenplay Because of the nature of the piece, and because we were all playing in one location, we were able to hire the cast for the run of the picture

The Screen Actors' Guild rules in the States say that if you hire an actor, let's say for three days' work and you have one day's work on the first day of shooting and the other two come at the end of say three weeks, you have to pay the actor for all the days intervening The reason for that is he presumably cannot take any other work to fill in that period, so he is effectively taken off the job market It costs a lot of money In this case the whole cast was present for the entire thing Because of the nature of the piece, everybody was visible in almost every shot, so it wasn't going to cost us any more to hire them for the run of the picture, and add on a week or two for the rehearsal

THE ACTOR – THE DOG – TYRANNY OF THE TEXT

They had rehearsed for about a week when I came back to the set When I arrived there was this collection of all the producers and the director and Al, all with very long faces I said, "What is going on?" and they said, "Well, Al has quit " One of the producers hastily said, "What Al is talking about is he just needs a dialogue rewrite I think this could be done with changing dialogue and so on " Al's answer to that was to get down on all fours and run around the room, barking like a dog, and then he ran out of the room I didn't have the presence of mind to ask him if he needed a walk in the park, or what!

PACINO SAID "LOOK YOU HAVE GOT TO UNDERSTAND SOMETHING, THIS IS A WONDERFUL SCREENPLAY, AND I REALLY WANT TO DO IT AND I AM NOT BULLSHITTING YOU ABOUT THAT BUT I'VE JUST FINISHED *THE GODFATHER PART II*. IF YOU HAD SEEN THAT YOU WOULD KNOW HOW INFINITELY DEPRESSED I AM "

You know it is very hard work to dig down inside yourself and find the truth of a role, or for the director to get inside the text It's what is called the 'tyranny of the text' It is a hell of a lot easier to change the screenplay, get rid of the writer, bring in a new writer to rewrite it and all those things They tend to get very arrogant in dealing with writers in that respect, it sort of rationalizes it for them Al would never deal with another actor on the set in that way

In an odd kind of way I didn't feel that it was aimed at me It was aimed at his producer, because the producer simply was not understanding the depth of the problem By doing what he did Al got his attention

It developed that he had decided not to play a homosexual, and I asked him why He said, "Look, I have built my career to the point that a lot of people are dependent on me and if I play this role they are going to laugh me out of the business and I am just not going to do it " The producer said to me, "What do you think we should do?" I said, "I don't see anything else to do except send the script to Dustin " Al said, "Look! Let me talk to you about something You have to understand something "

I said earlier that Leon was this screaming drag queen and hilariously funny – I had written him in exactly that way I had used a lot of his actual lines I wrote as well as I could to get my stuff to express the same kind of thing I managed to get a lot of those elements of their life together on screen by one stratagem or another Al Pacino said that he would have none of it and furthermore he wouldn't appear in a scene with the man face to face He would have to be separated completely There would be no sexual references of any kind, no fleshy references, no jokes of any kind All that stuff would have to go I said I couldn't see how to do this Al said, "Let me put something to you You have had lovers and you have had wives and you have had your failings out and your problems and fights Whenever you have had a real crisis scene in your relationship with somebody else, how often has sex come into it?" I said, "You can't take away the fact that a man married a man because he loved him " He said, "Why can't you just write that relationship and leave all the test of the bullshit out?"

I saw instantly that he was absolutely and totally right. I said, "You're totally right Why didn't you say that four months ago, when I could have written it when I had the time to do it right " He said, "Well, I wish you would try "So I sat down and it took about 24 hours to go through the body of the screenplay and get most of the stuff out It turned out to be astonishingly easy on that level, but the critical thing was the scene that plays in the movie on the telephone between the two men I mean, here is a scene where two people who love each other, can't live together, have to say goodbye, and you know and they know it is going to be goodbye forever

I had written it so that it happens inside the front door of the bank Here they have to play this one single scene of their life together that most cries out for some privacy, and they have got to play it in front of 2,000 armed cops and people screaming epithets at them, and all the rest of it At the end of it they kissed each other goodbye on the lips I must say it was a very good scene too But Al would not play a scene with the two of them actually confronting each other It had to be on the telephone So I had to rewrite that scene

You could not just take the dialogue from the scene in the door of the bank and do it as a telephone scene It simply wouldn't work. Since we had no time then, what I did was write a monologue for each one of them

For the Sonny character I wrote what must have been a four page monologue and a similar one for Chris Sarandon to use, using in part the dialogue elements that I had removed from other scenes, but there was also new stuff It was sort of postulating a situation that if you asked one of these characters, "Why is it that you love this person but you can't live with him, why?" they just vomit up all the good and all the bad They just start talking and it all comes out, as though they are making a big long historical statement to their psychiatrist under the influence of a truth serum

I set up a tape recorder and I gave each of them their monologue and they spent a few minutes just reading it through and I pressed the start button on the tape recorder and said "Go! Either one of you say anything you want to because I don't care."

One of them started talking and all of a sudden the other one interrupted and said "Wait a minute, every time you say that it makes me so mad, because ..." and up come some thoughts and they get into this terrible argument, using the materials of the monologue, improvising some stuff of their own It is wonderful, the stuff that is coming out. I let them run for about three quarters of an hour That is a hell of a lot of material

So then I stopped the tape recorder and said "You guys go and play with the rest of it " I took that away and we had a whole fleet of stenographers turn that into a transcript, and then I took that material and used it to write the scene on the telephone that eventually appears in the movie That was the only piece of rewrite that was required And again it was a perfect example of a creative collaboration between actor and writer It was wonderful and I have been grateful to Pacino ever since.

They then got that rehearsed and by the time they finished the rehearsals there was nothing for me to do The screenplay was done, so I just went down the first day of shooting and kissed everybody goodbye and left

AN $E,000,000 KISS

The writer's work is finished at this point. The next thing I know I get a furious call from the head of the studio who has seen the dailies of the telephone scene He said, "What happened to the scene in the door of the bank?" So I told him what had happened They had not told the studio that we were doing that rewrite and he was appalled and absolutely furious and was making mad noises about shutting down the film, which we knew damn well that he wouldn't do He said, "Goddammit, they threw away an $8 million kiss!"

It was his estimate that the picture would gross $8 million more if the two men kissed each other in the door of the bank than if they didn't

They flew me from Hollywood to New York to see a rough cut of the picture which Sidney Lumet was screening as part of a test screening for some film students It was rough It needed some work, but it was clearly recognizable as a winner, right from the word go That is how *Dog Day Afternoon* got written.

CONCLUSION

Dog Day Afternoon was released in 1975, three years after the actual event. It cost $3 5 million to produce and has earned about $23 million since release It was nominated for the 1975 Oscars for Best Actor (Al Pacino), Best Supporting Actor (Chris Sarandon), Best Director (Sidney Lumet), and Best Screenplay (Frank Pierson) Wojtowicz got 20 years and was paroled in 1978 His percentage earnings from the film were handed over to the hostages In 1975 Wojtowicz's wife, Carmen, filed an Invasion of Privacy lawsuit against Warners and Dell Publishing The Author's League filed an Amicus Curiae brief in favour of the defendants and the case was dismissed in 1978 ■

FRANK PIERSON SELECTED CREDITS. *Cat Ballou* (1965) *Cool Hand Luke* (1967), *The Happening* (1967), *The Looking Glass War* (1970) (writer and director), *The Anderson Tapes* (1971), *The Neon Ceiling* (TV movie) (1973) (director) *Amanda Fallon* (TV series) (1973), *Dog Day Afternoon* (1975) *A Star is Born* (1976) (writer and director), *King of the Gypsies* (1978) (writer and director) *Hoyoyoe* (TV movie)(1980), *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* (TV series) (1985) (director) *JJ Starbuck* (TV series) (1987) (executive manager), *84 Charlie Mopic* (1989) (assistance) CURRENT PROJECTS *Three Christs of Ypsilanti* (TV) (writer and director), *Presumed Innocent Brothers and Keepers* (TV), *In Country*.

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*Tom Rickman's screenwriting credits include *Kansas City Bomber* (1972), *W W and the Dixie Dancekings* (1975), *Coal Miner's Daughter* (1980), *Everybody's All American* (1988) Alvin Sargent's writing credits include *The Way We Were* (1973), *Paper Moon* (1973), *Bobby Deerfield* (1977), *Ordinary People* (1980) *Nuts* (1987) *Dominick and Eugene* (1988)

BY • FRED • HARDEN

• TALKING FILM STOCK

ARE AUSTRALIANS CONSERVATIVE WHEN IT COMES TO USING THE NEW FILM STOCKS? WE HEAR FROM LABS, MANUFACTURERS AND A USER, ACADEMY AWARD NOMINEE JOHN SEALE, WHO HAS SOME POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE REMARKS TO MAKE ABOUT AMERICAN LAB EXPERIENCES...

"CERTAINLY FROM MY EXPERIENCE OF THE EUROPEAN MARKET, AND THE REPORTS FROM AMERICA SUGGEST THE SAME, WHEN A NEW STOCK IS INTRODUCED EVERYBODY WANTS TO KNOCK YOUR DOOR DOWN TO SEE WHAT THEY CAN DO WITH IT. HERE IT'S QUITE THE OPPOSITE REACTION. THE SHUTTERS GO UP AND THE RESPONSE IS: I KNOW WHAT I CAN GET FROM THIS PARTICULAR STOCK SO I'LL STICK WITH IT! "

GRAHAM MONTEITH, MANAGER, MOTION PICTURE PRODUCTS AGFA

THE BIG THREE international film manufacturers, Eastman Kodak, Fuji and Agfa Gevaert, face special problems with the Australian film industry, and it's not just coping with the production swings between boom and bust. It appears that Australians are reactionary when it comes to changing film stocks and processes. Is it, as Graham Monteith suggests, a conservatism born out of our experience for so long with just one supplier, Eastman Kodak? Or does it go beyond that and point to an inability, for whatever reason, to handle change?

Do we, as cinematographers and producers, cling to a formula approach to filmmaking that is now outdated and is actually costing us production money? And are we dabbling, using too many different stocks on the same project and causing problems for ourselves, the labs and the final product?

With the recent arrival of even more new stocks from Kodak, and in anticipation of another round of tests and discussions, I turned to the laboratories and representatives of the filmstock manufacturers for some answers. Then, hoping to disprove the evidence, I talked to Australian director of photography John Seale about his approach to the subject.

MAKING A CHOICE: PART ONE

I've never heard it suggested that Fuji film has a Japanese look, or Kodak looks American, yet we somehow can make sweeping generalizations such as "Agfa has a European 'look' " In tests, any of those stocks can reproduce a colour chart with an accuracy that defies all but most critical evaluation. There are obvious differences in colour dyes but with the correct exposure and filtration in shooting and printing almost any colour variation can be introduced.

Graham Monteith finds it difficult to understand how the final choice of a stock is made. "My attitude is that I can tell anybody what I like about the stock but the bottom line is that he or she has got to be able to see it on the screen. They have to test it the way that they shoot it, so I've always let it be known that I'm happy to supply free test rolls. It's hard to believe when people don't take advantage of that. Then, of course there are those that try it, say they like it and have few complaints, yet they still don't come back and use it on the job."

So if we don't even want to try free film how do we make our selection? Or do we just avoid anything new?

A reluctance to change isn't just a complaint from Agfa and Fuji who are trying to win a share of the market. There seems to be a real reluctance to embrace any new stocks, an experience Graham Monteith has had with the advertising commercials market. "In Queensland we supply about 80 per cent plus of the commercials market. There are probably only four or five major companies but they shoot a lot of film and have traditionally used Agfa. Before the introduction of the XT stocks, they all loved the previous negative 682 stock, and we had real acceptance problems with people saying, 'Why are you getting rid of the old one?'"

It appears that often our judgements are subjective, conservative, and rarely based on how we test the stock. Apparently only a few of the tests that the laboratories see attempt to examine the innate capabilities of a new stock before it is accepted or discarded as unsatisfactory. How often have you been surprised when some other cinematographer's style seems to pull a startling result from a stock that you dismissed?

THE ROLE OF THE LABORATORY

The process of introducing a new stock seems to prepare the industry for a full and fair evaluation. The cameramen get their test rolls free for the asking and the lab is always supplied with rolls to do their sensitometric tests, and to ascertain basic filter packs. As a part of a basic education process the manufacturers' representatives talk to staff about the stock, what it's called, and discuss its strengths and limitations and technical data. It is not unusual, Peter Willard from Atlab says, " for us to have technical information about the new stocks, months in advance of the launch. Kodak are good that way, they sit down with us and are very honest about what the stock can or cannot do, and because of that we are ready. There's none of that 'My god, here's a new stock what are we going to do about it?'

"It means that any lab has to be more on their toes because of the number of stocks around. Years ago when I was in printing, there would have been only three or four basic packs because there were only that many stocks around. Now our information board that tells a printer what basic packs light to use is probably five times the size that it was less than 10 years ago."

However he continues, "More than occasionally we get stock in that is incorrectly labelled, and while we can identify it by the edge number information, if we checked every single roll while we are assembling everything for printing, you'd never get your rushes the next morning. So we just go by the order and if it comes off wrong it's very easy to check and we can do it again."

Is it on that result then, that how most of us base our impression of a new stock? I asked Dominic Case from Colorfilm if the lab ever gets caught out in those early introduction stages.

"It's happened," he says. "Even before the manufacturer has had a chance to brief us and supply stock for testing, some enterprising DOP has brought back a can of stock from overseas and it arrives on our dispatch bench one night with a weird string of numbers and a request to do it at a standard workprint light!

"And there are so many stocks now, Kodak has just released a string of new ones, Fuji has more than you can poke a stick at, and some of them we only see in a blue moon. The more esoteric stocks are also the one that are used under very different lighting situations so that the lab can't get a real feel for them."

So, I asked, how does he feel the testing process should be handled? The reply was a predictable plea for time. "You can't simply take a new stock and send it into the lab and not discuss what the lab has got to do with it. By expecting it to be graded overnight or even done at some printer light that

belongs to some other stock, and the next morning saying whether or not they like it, then they really aren't being fair to the stock, or, I guess, the lab

"We can put as much into it as they can in ont range of exposures, so the way we like it to be done is for the cinematographer to come to us and say, ' 'I'm going to shoot a test on 5248 tonight and can you do me a one-light and then a graded print and I'll come in and see you in a few days and we talk it over ' The usual situaoon is that we are not left enough time "

Does he believe that we are conservative, and reluctant to change?

"I think that Australian cinematographers and labs are keen to try new stocks out and we get lots of tests through when a new stock comes out But I can't help noticing that very often even though the DOP is very happy with it , then a note of caution comes in and they say, 'Well, we are not quite sure what will happen when we dupe it, or if the latitude is the same, or maybe it will fall apart with under exposure and as we don't know it so well and people tend to fall back on the workhorses they love, even though the test is good "

Peter Willard from Atlab doesn't believe that labs affect what stocks cameramen buy, and discouraged the idea of even trying to "We get asked for our opinions, but we want to service the market and not get marked as a Kodak lab or a Fuji lab We must be able to handle all filmstocks We try to give an honest answer, for instance we don't process enough Fuji for me to have an opinion, or offer one We do process a reasonable amount of Agfa, not as much as Kodak, and what we see is good It looks different and that's good – it's pointless Agfa or Fuji trying to come up with a stock that looks like Kodak. There is always interest in the new stocks and most cameramen then go with one or the other because it's pertinent to the job they are shooting "

RUSSELL CHAPMAN KODAK: WE SUPPLY A RANGE OF NICHE PRODUCTS IN ORDER TO WIDEN THE CINEMATOGRAPHER'S CHOICE

PETER WILLARD ATLAB: THERE IS ALWAYS INTEREST IN THE NEW STOCKS .. MOST DOP'S GO WITH ONE OR THE OTHER BECAUSE OF THE JOB THEY RE SHOOTING

GRAHAM MONTEITH AGFA: OUR APPROACH IS ONE OF EVOLUTION, MAKING CURRENT STOCKS BETTER

THE LABORATORY MAKES A CHOICE

So if we are happy to test new stocks, are we getting the best results possible from the lab, or are we holding them back by insisting as we apparently do on one print stock? Peter Willard thinks so "When it comes to release print stocks, there I think Australians are more conservative than they care to admit Atlab has used millions of feet of Agfa print film in the last five years and have had absolutely no problems The Agfa is used for multiple-copy release prints for overseas where they are happy to accept it. But as far as being able to use it for workprints for the domestic market, then no! People want their rushes on Kodak

"It's pretty obvious that if you shoot on Fuji or Agfa neg that you'll get the best results printing onto their print stocks, and it seems ridiculous that when cameramen choose the different stocks for a special look, the editors are resisting having their rushes printed on anything but Kodak

"Everyone has to really think about what stock they are shooting right down the line From the lab's point of view, there is no real reason why people aren't keen to get their prints on another stock They just say, 'We don't want to,' and the lab doesn't press it "

I asked Dominic Case if this was a common experience, or did he think that the lab was being conservative by doing all their rushes on Eastman stock? He disagreed, saying, "It is not so much conservatism, as a way to provide a standard, because at least you know whether you are looking at neg differences or lab differences But apart from the workprint we sometimes suggest a different print stock that is right for the film For example *Die Hard*, which we did last year, was a picture that worked very well with rich saturated contrasty look, with really blocked up blacks and strong warm tones So Fuji was a natural for that

"In Australia we've stood very strongly by the concept of one-light workprints for as long as there have been film labs It provides the yardstick that the cinematographer can work by It doesn't mean that we are intransigent and won't change that one light Everybody has got a slightly different style of lighting but the best way is on a production to select the light that is going to suit the style of the film on day one, or preferably day minus three If grading is then needed at least it is from a standard reference point "

He concluded by saying, "I liken it to the cinematographer having a small bore rifle and taking shots at a target As long as we hold the target still then there is the chance of getting a bull's eye every ome But if he's a bit off to the left and we move the target and he moves the gun then we are never going to get it right."

TOO MANY STOCKS

So if it is really up to the supplier to change the market, because the labs believe that they can only go along with what their clients want how do they convince us that we really need all these stocks? I asked Kodak's Russell Chapman if introducing so many new stocks was innovation for the sake of it Was it just because they can push the boundaries a little more every time, or was is it all led by the market?

"I believe it's a little of all of those The world demand for images is increasing and people are using more and more film to supply those images The consumption by television and video is certainly a key factor To widen the choice or the palette of the cinematographer so that he can supply that market we produce a range of niche products

"For example 5297, our high speed daylight balanced film, acknowledged the need to shoot in low light levels but of daylight quality, and that nowadays HMI lights are a fact of life, on productions and in sports stadiums, etc There was also a real speed and fine grain improvement that came from the way the emulsion was made with that stock It's part of providing the cinematographer with a range of products with the same dye set from which he can choose the right speed, contrast and grain for the production "

Fuji takes a similar approach to Kodak, with a continuing range of specialist products, but Agfa has chosen to be different, as Graham Monteith explained "When Agfa entered the market we were pushing the idea that you should be able to go on location and use just one stock for low light through to bright daylight conditions Movies like *Out of Africa*, where all the exteriors were shot on our high speed stock, showed that incredible latitude was possible with the new stocks The other manufacturers take the approach of making different stocks for different occasions I don't believe that we will get into that Our approach is one of evolution, making the current stocks better "

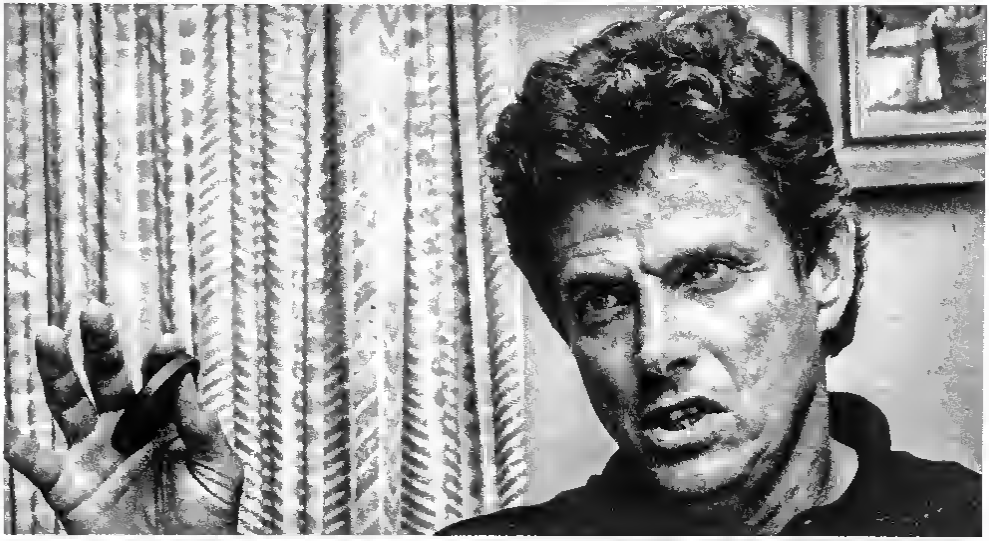
It is an approach that Dominic Case has a certain sympathy with He is worried that "we are getting to the point were there are so many stocks that people are 'dabbling', often we get three or more different stocks used on one production This makes it hard to keep track of things and very often they are not getting the exact differences between them that they would look for "

This, he points out, is most obvious with the use of the new high speed stocks He gives the example of a night shoot with a subject standing lit by a shop window, "where you can see everything far down the street because of the terrific latitude This, of course, flattens out the nighttime look which could be better achieved on normal stock with just a bit more light on the subject and so providing good blacks where it is meant to be black "

Almost as an aside Peter Willard said that he believed that some areas of the market seemed to be less conservative than others Documentary producers, for example, are prepared try new stocks, because there are often real price advantages and they are more conscious of budget "Whereas," Willard continues, "on feature films you are not going to get Russell Boyd or a Dean Semler changing from Kodak in an easy fashion The exceptions are people like Peter James, who seem to enjoy changing stocks for particular projects."

And so may I suggest, does John Seale

Gorillas in the Mist had five Academy Award nominations, one of them for the cinematography of John Seale Seale had long been known as one of Australia's best camera operators and has become one of our best cinematographers Chasing the work, and director friends such as Peter Weir, Seale has been shooting almost continuously on American features for the last few years



To avoid being categorized, he has always tried to shoot 'different' pictures, and notes wryly that, despite that, "I've done two jungle pictures, two school pictures, and two cop pictures, but I try to spread them out a bit."

He has a lot to say about his craft and his enthusiastic conversation led us across much more than his willingness to continually experiment with the new film stocks.

Trying to draw him into explaining why some cinematographers seem to embrace changes, I asked him if the use of a new stock was a choice made by people other than himself.

"Sometimes the stock is suggested, some stocks are cheaper than others and the producer says, 'What about ...?', but it's always a suggestion and they don't push you. I like to take a new stock and test it, analyzing it to see what's best for that film. Is it fast enough, is the grain OK, etc. Sometimes the grain is too fine, for example on *Mosquito Coast* we chose Fuji high speed all the way through and that gave us just the little touch of grain. Nobody ever saw a release print of the original neg of that; in the US you usually strike eight or 10 prints of the original neg for viewing at Academy screenings and things like that. They all saw prints from the dupes (duplicate negatives) and so it was even grainier and picked up contrast and didn't have that pretty, pretty Hollywood look about it, which is why we went for the Fuji negative.

"To be bold, I feel that the Fuji doesn't portray greens too well, it tends to muddy them. Peter Weir and I looked at it and said, 'Wow, it's terrific!' because we felt that Ally Fox's (Harrison Ford's character) jungle shouldn't be pretty and the audience had to wonder why the hell he would go there. Whereas for the next jungle picture, *Gorillas in the Mist*, I looked at all the stocks again and we went for the Agfa, choosing the high speed again because whenever you get in under the canopy there's no light. The Agfa seems to have a yellower basic colour to the stock and makes the greens a lot prettier, and Dian Fossey's jungle had to look pretty because it was her life, the reason she stayed there.

"On *Rain Man* I went back to Kodak, because they had released the blue screen projection stock 5295 and everybody grabbed it. Without being crass" – and here Seale paused to put on a convincing American accent – "it was an American picture with an American director and an American writer and so I used an American stock. I found the combination of the Panavision Primo lenses and the '95 stock sensational!

"The blacks in the screen were as black as the surround, normally it's a grey and you are always trying to get them as black as you can. I used to sit there at night and go crazy about the blacks! I was amazed and it opened up a whole new feeling of composition because the blacks just fall away and you can then re-compose the highlights anywhere you want. Your composition becomes the whole theatre, it just happens that the highlights are in front of the audience.

"It didn't quite work, but after *Rain Man* I went to Delaware for Peter Weir's new picture *Dead Poets' Society* and I said 'Peter, look at this, Primo lenses and '95, the blacks are astonishing. Well, we used a New York lab instead of a Los Angeles one and I couldn't get the blacks and it was only later that I found out that the New York lab was running a standard speed process and LA was running at high speed which increased the contrast a little bit. So now when I time the *Dead Poets' Society* I have to ask them to run the prints at high speed.

"Normally you are trying to knock that back because it is increasing the contrast, but I find the negatives today are so forgiving in the high and low exposure latitudes you are damn near shooting available light. As soon as you put a light on it's overlit because it's handling such a contrast range. I find that I'm using black draped reflectors to stop bounce so that I can get the contrast. My crews learn to carry the black covers, I think they call them negative reflectors, to block out the fill light.

"Choosing a stock is a funny thing. I had lunch with a very well known American cinematographer, Academy award winner, terrific guy, and I had just come back from *Mosquito Coast*. He asked what stock we were using and I said we were on Fuji high speed and he just shook his head ever so slightly. I said hesitantly, 'You don't agree with that?' and he said exactly what I said earlier, 'I'm an American cameraman, I shoot American pictures and shoot American stock,' and I went, 'Ooops.'

"I thought, fair enough, you know your stock so well you know exactly what it's going to do all the time, and I must confess that when I change negative stocks, my heart's in my throat all the time. Even when you've done your tests you're not too sure of your contrast ratios.

"On *Gorillas in the Mist* I was working with a London lab and it was the first time I used Agfa high speed. In the jungle I immediately re-rated it to overexpose it one stop, and that's a heck of a lot to give a lab. When you are using the spotmeter in the jungle and reading the greens and blacks and you find that the highlight ratio can hold easily a stop on fleshtones, I thought that would be heaps. I thought that would mean that the fleshtones would be bright but not burnt out, and the greens would not be muddy and dark.

"We had a week's turnaround on the rushes, and in the first few days' reports they said, 'You're printing 25s across the middle.' I thought that was terrific on a one-light print that you'd have in Australia, but they said 'You've got to give us another half a stop,' another four or six points or whatever, so in the end I was rating the stock down to about 70 to 80 ASA - high speed stock! I was then printing in the low to middle 30s and they were quite happy. I didn't get a chance to get to London to grade it but having seen the prints, it's all there.

JOHN SEALE: I'VE HAD AMERICAN CREWS JUST STAND THERE AGHAST AS I'VE BEEN READING THE TEMP METER AND CALLING FOR AN ISO AND STAND BY WITH AN 81EF BECAUSE IT WILL DROP BEFORE THE NEXT SHOT. THEY SAY, 'WHAT ARE THESE FILTERS?' I HAVE TO EXPLAIN THAT I'M QUASI-BEING THE COLOUR TEMPERATURE OF THE SUN SO THAT WHEN IT HITS EUNOSEEN IT'S STILL A WHITE LIGHT. THEY CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT, BECAUSE THEY JUST SAY TO THE LAB 'CORRECT THE RED OUT'

BELOW: JOHN SEALE FILM CREDITS: LEFT TO RIGHT: THE HITCHER, THE MOSQUITO COAST, GORILLAS IN THE MIST

"You bounce, you don't feel confident. Even too *Rain Man*, I was nervous going back with Eastman. It would be a lot easier if you could get a one-light print from the US labs, but it's always timed, and that's their system.

"I've had some terrible dramas because of that with the overseas labs and it makes me sure in my belief that the Australian technician is one of the best trained in the world. Even England doesn't go on a one-light print, they also have graded rushes – it's madness. On *Rain Man*, when it came to timing the release print the timer had to do two print runs for himself, just to find out where his work print was. He doesn't have the computer readout, so he looks at the workprint and says, 'I see there is a bit of golden light in there,' and grades for that, believing the whole time that the negative is going to be totally suspect.

"He did one run and didn't get too close on some scenes, then he did another run and then when I got to it I still had six pages of notes that I tried to read over the phone to him one lunch break on another film, and I know damn well that he never wrote it down. He thought, if it's close to the workprint then that's it. It's been nominated (for an Academy Award for cinematography), so I suppose there's no argument!

"What I do is build everything into the negative, if I want it to look late afternoon at two o'clock and it doesn't have the redness, then I stick an extra 81 EF in, I've taken my colour temperature reading and I add the right filters to get the look only to find that the lab has timed it out, looking at the analyzer they say oh, it's a bit red, take it out! The best you can hope is that when you ring them they say, 'Well, I watched the negative closely and saw that this was a bit red, so I thought that's what you wanted and printed it straight off the neg.' I say, 'Thank you,' because that's where its at, but American cameramen don't do that.

"I'm used to having the colour temperature meter out and as the sun slowly sets and the colour temperature gets warmer, I read it and say, 'It won't match midday,' so I start pulling the red out of the 85 and correcting it, because on an Australian feature that's what you've got to do. When the one-light rushes go up and it's still five o'clock in the afternoon, you've whacked extra red on your fill lights and the reflectors are bouncing in normal light and then you correct the whole lot in your lens, and it looks like midday. I've had American crews just stand there aghast, as I've been reading the temp meter and calling for an 85C and stand by with an 81EF because it will drop before the next shot. They say, 'What are these filters?' I have to explain that I'm quartering the colour temperature of the sun, so that when it hits tungsten it's still a white light. They can't understand it, because the American cameramen just say to the lab 'Correct the red out'.

"Using the filtration like that doesn't speed you up or slow you down at all, it just keeps the negative rich and exactly what you want, and it answers a problem. I've had a few times with editors. At one stage the editor even order a tri-colour separation of the negative to pull each layer of the primaries up. And I said 'Wait on! What are you doing? It's got to match the rest of the stuff,' and she said, 'Well it doesn't!' And I told her, 'That's because the rest of the workprint has been graded wrong, that's the correct one!' The light dawned.

"Then you have to handle the negative yet again because the timers haven't followed what was on the negative and they light the picture by saying that it's too dark, it's too red and pulling stuff out. They think that they are saving your arse because then you will use that lab again, and they'll look good for the producer.

"I go in with a big stick and say it's all too flat, and I beat the desk. I say, 'No, No. All exteriors make them four points hotter than you normally do, so that the tops of the shoulders are starting to blow a little and you get the feeling that it is day, brightness. They are making the night scenes print up and the daytime stuff flat and down so when you cut to day there's no contrast, and it's flat and monotonous.' I say, 'I'll light the highlights into the night shoot if you give me a negative that's rich in black, keep it down so that when we cut to daylight it goes BANG and the audience should almost reach for sunglasses!'

"I love that jump, the editors say to you, 'But it's going to pop!' and I say, 'Let it, it's fantastic, and it adds to the dramatic effect.'

"An example was the love scene in *Witness*, where you talk to the director, Peter Weir, about how the scene should look when she decides that she is going to have this man. She takes off her hat, which represents the religious side of her, and she is going to put that down and forget it, she's going to go outside on a late afternoon. Peter said, 'I'd love it if it was raining and overcast.' Well it was overcast and we'd agreed that it should look very moody, so that the last of the afternoon light was simply a top light, no fill – they're just two bodies kissing, and that's the moment. I shot it one and a half to two stops under, reading the highlight on the top of the fleshtones, and it was reading pretty right on the spot meter; very moody but Peter is bold, he likes moody stuff, so we went for it.

"Well it came back in rushes the next day and it looked like midday; they had forced that print so far that it was grey, washed out, and the grain was as big as golfballs. And I died, and said, don't these blokes read the negative? The negative must have been as thin as glass but they didn't read it. 'We'll save him,' they say. They didn't read the script, they didn't look at the preceding shot which we did on a different day.

"It was the first film I'd done in America, so I got on the phone and said, 'What the hell are you doing, go and look at the negative and tell me what it's like. You can't give me a report saying that everything looks fine and send me that sort of positive.' I went right off and I remember a little voice inside me said, 'Gee Seale, is this you, is this really you, shouting at a laboratory?' I'd always worked through Peter Willard, and with the lovely Bill Gooley when he was alive, and Richard Pierkowski and Arthur Cambridge on timing and it's always been fantastic, real relationships. And there was standing in a phone box I abusing a New York laboratory.

"A lot of the other blokes who are going over there, and rightly so because they are good, fast and good, they ring occasionally and I try to help from my experience. They say it's OK, they've promised me a one-light workprint, and I say don't hold your breath, they'll promise you till the cows come home but you won't get it. And sure enough they didn't, because they don't believe what you are doing.

"Now I write a novel on the camera sheets and say, 'This is late afternoon, low key, late sun on faces, moody, some good blacks in the background.' A bloody novel, but I don't think they read it. They are running them through at high speed anyway, they are not looking at the film, not looking at the story and no matter how they fete you and take you to lunch, they still throw in some of the most ridiculously awful prints you have ever seen.

"And that's where the Australian training is so good. You know the negative is all right, you know the colours are in there, it's rich and it's all there."

Playing devil's advocate, I asked whether he could have reached the same results with almost any of the new stocks, given the amount of control that he has.

"Yeah, to be really honest, I suppose you could get the same effect with any of the other stocks with some shifts in the printing light. Somehow it's fun to juggle the negatives, it keeps you nervous because you can get complacent with just using Eastmancolor. Eastman is sort of the Rolls Royce of stocks, the old '47 is still one of the loveliest of daylight stocks you can lay your hands on.

"I haven't had a chance to try the Kodak 50 ASA stock but it's great that they are not just trying to go faster, they're going *slower* – that's wonderful!

"As I said, working with new stocks makes you nervous and that's good because it keeps you right on your toes. It's fun because you are constantly finding new things about what's going on."

If the results push cinematography forward, as the work of John Seale does, then there's reason enough for more of us to develop a little anxiety.

JOHN SEALE : FILMOGRAPHY

Australian features include: *Deathcheaters* (1976), *Fatty Finn* (1980), *The Survivor* (1981), *Doctors and Nurses* (1981), *Goodbye Paradise* (1982), *Ginger Meggs* (1982), *Careful He Might Hear You* (1983), *BMX Bandits* (1984), *Silver City* (1984), *The Empty Beach* (1985). Overseas features include: *Witness* (1985), *The Hitcher* (1986), *Children of a Lesser God* (1986), *The Mosquito Coast* (1986), *Stakeout* (1987), *Gorillas in the Mist* (1988), *Rain Man* (1988).

ALAN PARKER'S

MISSISSIPPI BURNING

HYSTERICAL OR HISTORICAL? A FICTION OR A FARRAGO? *MISSISSIPPI BURNING*, WRITTEN BY CHRIS GEROLMO AND DIRECTED BY ALAN PARKER, HAS BEEN THE SUBJECT OF SOME HEATED DEBATE. JOHN SLAVIN AND JOHN SALMOND PRESENT TWO DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEW ABOUT THE FILM AND ITS TREATMENT OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

JOHN SALMOND

IN JUNE 1964, at the beginning of what has come to be known as "Freedom Summer", three young civil rights volunteers went missing in Neshoba County, Mississippi, last seen in the county seat of Philadelphia. The president, Lyndon Johnson, who by now had made the cause of Southern blacks his own, prompted his reluctant FBI director, J Edgar Hoover, into instituting the biggest manhunt in the Bureau's history. Scores of agents and hundreds of US troops descended on Neshoba County. Eventually the Bureau was successful. Agents bribed a local Ku Klux Klan member into revealing both the location of the bodies of the slain men and the names of their killers. Five of these, including Philadelphia's deputy sheriff, were brought to some sort of justice. Found innocent of all charges in state courts, they were eventually convicted in federal court of civil rights offences and sent to jail. It was the FBI's most successful operation in the whole of the civil rights era, at a time when Bureau agents, notoriously, often seemed more interested in harrying civil rights workers than protecting them from the violence of Southern segregationists.

Alan Parker has used this incident around which to build a film about the violence of these years. *Mississippi Burning* is emphatically not the story of the hunt for the real life killers. Rather, it is a work of fiction based on the Philadelphia incident and set in the imaginary town of Shiloh in Jessup County. Neither in the depiction of the search for the missing men and the way the FBI eventually broke the case, nor in the methods by which the murderers are at last literally unmasked is any attempt made to follow the actual sequence of events. The focus is on the tension between the smart young agent in charge of the operation (Willem Dafoe) and his hard boiled Mississippi born assistant, Rupert Anderson (superbly played by Gene Hackman), and Anderson's interaction with the wife of Shiloh's deputy sheriff, all against a backdrop of Klan inspired violence and terror. Shiloh's blacks appear rarely, and always as victims. The film is not about them at all, and this is one of the reasons for the controversy that has surrounded its release.

In my view, to criticize *Mississippi Burning* for not being a documentary is beside the point. Parker never intended this. What he has done, and I believe, truly, is to recreate a time and a climate. I lived in the American South during the early 1960s. I knew towns like Shiloh, I spoke to men like the killers, I heard the public incitements of the Klansmen, and saw the violence that often resulted. Parker has got this climate of fear and hatred exactly right, as the rural South massed to meet the final challenge to its "traditional way of life", the civil rights revolution of Martin Luther King, which the Federal government, and especially Lyndon Johnson, in the end joined. In 1964 Mississippi was, as historian James Silver wrote, a "closed society", its institutions dominated by the White Citizens' Council and the Klan. He had to leave the state for so saying, dismissed from the University of Mississippi at the insistence of its trustees, with scarcely a dissentient voice. *Mississippi Burning* explains why, and this is its importance, an importance which transcends its rather superficial final 20 minutes or so, as the case is comprehensively wrapped up in a manner reminiscent of *Mission Impossible*.

Mississippi Burning, then, gets a lot right. Frances McDormand's sensitive portrayal of Deputy Sheriff Pell's gentle wife beautifully illustrates another truth, what sympathy there was for blacks in the rural South, more often than not came from lower class white women, also the victims of oppression, victims of the "good old boy" husbands who were killing those who wished to change the South and terrorizing the powerless blacks. There is a scene in the film that makes this point superbly. Mrs Pell is chatting to her black washerwoman and cuddling the woman's infant granddaughter, when Pell (Brad Dourif) comes to say goodbye. Almost nothing spoken, yet the gentle, intimate ambience is ruined and the washerwoman quickly leaves. The sympathy the black woman has for the white, however, is clear from the expression on her face. In understated touches such as these, Parker catches so well the complexities of race relations in the rural South.

I first saw *Mississippi Burning* in January, in a small Southern town. The audience was predominantly a young one – most of them would not have been born in 1964. Products of the desegregated South, they found the hatred and violence of the film not so much upsetting as unbelievable. Whether black or white, it had never been a part of the South they had known. Yet at the same time David Dukes, avowed Klansman and white supremacist, was busy getting himself elected to the Louisiana State Legislature, despite the opposition of everyone from Jesse Jackson to ex president Reagan. *Mississippi Burning* reminds us forcefully that it was only 25 years ago that men such as he were in the mainstream of Southern politics, shows us graphically what they wrought, and why they had to be defeated. We all need such reminders, and especially so do Southerners, both black and white.

JOHN SLAVIN

'WHAT'S GOT four eyes and can't see?' asks Anderson (Gene Hackman) one of the FBI agents investigating the disappearance of three civil rights workers in 1964. "The State of Mississippi." On one level this Alan Parker film is very interested in exploring the theme of seeing / blindness, public show / hidden truths. Anderson's remark implies the South is blind to its racial imbalances, as exemplified in two of the chief suspects in the crime, and the agents' doppelgangers, the Sheriff of Jessup County, Stuckey, (Gailard Sartain) and his Deputy Pell (Brad Dourif).

Between them the Federal agents also have four eyes but the film at first seems to suggest they might be suffering from the same kind of blindness, certainly to the interests of justice, and increasingly to the chains of cause and effect which Anderson's remark seems to hold Southern segregationists guilty of

The crux of the film rests neither with the attempts of the investigators to discover the whereabouts of the three missing students, nor with those who were responsible for their deaths (the very first scene of the film gives us most of the answer to both questions) but with the starkly contrasted methods of the two men to expose that truth Ward (Willem Dafoe) is one of the best and the brightest. a Kennedy man, Harvard educated, an idealist at least as far as the fight for civil rights is concerned, a man who does the job by bureau procedure He symbolizes the Waspish North the combination of power, money and the American Way

Anderson is from the South, an ex sheriff like Stuckey, the product of a poor white farming family, a sceptic He doesn't, at least at first, believe that the system can be changed So sympathetic is he to the predicament of southern whites in the initial stages of the case that he seems constantly to be echoing Stuckey's white racist homilies- if you intervene in the delicate social balance there'll be bodies on the street For him the case is civil, not political And the clever twist of Chris Gerolmo's script is that it's precisely because he sympathizes with local values and their cynicism about changing the system that Anderson sees further than his straitlaced partner, he understands that to discover the truth the system must be penetrated, seduced from within, the danger being that it will in turn infect the trespasser The target of his seduction however is the decent wife of the sheriff's deputy (Frances McDormand)

If Anderson is successful in extracting information from her it's because he has closely observed her relationship with her husband (one which parallels his with his own ex wife), has the ability to spot Pell's involvement with the Klan through an old wedding photograph, and because he identifies her as decent, a flaw in the racist wall Only an insider, one corrupted by the same system, could understand what is going on It is one of the major weaknesses in this scenario that at a crucial moment – Pell has severely bashed his wife and Anderson knows that his involvement with her is directly responsible for this – the agent metamorphoses before our eyes into a one man vigilante of the Dirty Harry kind who declares. "These people crawled out of the sewers Maybe we should get down in the gutter with them " The film encourages viewers to believe that, given the violence of the ambience Anderson has been moving in, this is legally and morally justified

GENE HACKMAN AND WILLEM DAFOE AS THE TWO FSI AGENTS WITH SIMILAR COATS BUT CONFLICTING STYLES IN *MISSISSIPPI BURNING*

His victim isn't the guilty deputy and the Klan associates whom he bashes, threatens and deludes into revealing the truth It's his idealistic partner Ward For if Ward is extraordinarily naive about the violent nature of white supremacy – he insists on questioning a black worker in a segregated diner who then becomes the focus of white prejudice for the remainder of the film (goodness too produces its victims) – it is he who believes that he can change the social injustice he sees around him by direct action and that at the same time the legal system he represents can remain undefiled

In a key scene which has already drawn some criticism, he leads a dozen business suited agents waist deep into the swamps, looking for the abandoned car of the murdered civil rights workers It's a potent image straight out of a Magritte painting While it demonstrates Ward's professional doggedness, it also signals that no truth can be obtained without climbing down into the mire

It is central to Parker's position about the way history works – for whether you view his film as a piece of realism or as a cinematic fable, it is centrally interested in the means by which social change is effected – that it is Ward and through him the authorities back in Washington who fundamentally shift the civilized code of handling injustice through legally sanctioned means Ward gives the green light for Anderson's new-found desire to expose the killers, to get them sentenced under LBJ's recently inducted Civil Rights Act as federal offenders and to employ sanctioned violence to achieve it

The resolution of the case is a carefully orchestrated re run of the violence inflicted on local blacks and Mrs Pell in the first half of the film, Anderson gives the Klan direct experience of victimization from the black point of view It's a scenario nicely calculated to win gung ho support for his vigilante tactics with Ward wringing his hands on the sidelines to remind us that the system is benign, no matter how far from the straight and narrow its operatives digress The film's last shot confirms Anderson's methods and Ward's acquiescence a desegregated group, both black and white, stands around a civil rights worker's grave singing the negro spiritual, "Walk on by faith " And that's how the Good is established Job accomplished

Something is dangerously wrong with all this Let's put aside the Rambo responses which the script quite cynically exploits (There are several references to scrotums and balls the losing thereof and who squeezes whom as a kind of male performance test "Ballsy little bastard isn't he?" Anderson declares approvingly of his boss)

Where are the blacks in this struggle? Where are the fictional equivalents of Robert Moses, who in that terrible summer organized a community based campaign to establish the rights of blacks to register for voting, or Stokely Carmichael, who was in the South orchestrating white and black students in civil disobedience? Not a sign In fact the film shows us two kinds of blacks – victims and Christian activists In one of its more blatantly exploitive tactics it casts a 14 year-old boy, Aaron (Darius McCary), as the only black activist in sight An adherent of Martin Luther King's call to non violent resistance Aaron (and the political position he is made to symbolize) is quickly polished off by a Klansman as he kneels, ridiculously praying for divine intervention, by one swift kick to the groin

This derogation of the civil rights movement is necessary in order to leave the way open for Parker's white supremacist argument – that the blacks are incapable of helping themselves and must be protected by well meaning white policemen who know a thing or two about kicking back

We've become accustomed to seeing the cinema tell lies about Vietnam It's a new experience to have it fabricate lies about civil rights The recent documentary from PBS shown on ABC, *Eyes on the Prize*, makes it quite clear that the political struggle in the South was won by an alliance of religious and political activists the majority of whom were black, who adhered to Martin Luther King's brilliant tactic of protest through non violence and that the breakthrough came not as Parker's reactionary film would have us believe, with the successful indictment of the killers (the irony being that a sentence of seven to 10 years in the South was considered successful), but through the historic march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama of the following year when an entire nation was horrified by the spectacle of blacks being shot and bashed by policemen on the Pettus Bridge Civil disobedience as media spectacle, as the locals derisively label it At least Parker got that right But his perversion of the civil rights strategy of non violence is unforgivable

Does any of this matter any more? The film is full of longeurs since with a bit of historical recall we already know the outcome But it is the means by which that outcome is arrived at which is the central issue here This is a study of America in the Eighties, not the Sixties Recast its victimized local population of inert blacks and its Klansmen who don't play fair and you will easily find an analogy, at least in the American imagination, in Central America Parker's FBI agents are mired in the guilt associated with any kind of direct action, but their justification is both in Ward's comment on the suicide of the town's mayor, that to know evil is abroad and to do nothing is to be equally guilty, and in that last happy scene of a society restored to its democratic roots Here again, however, the film lies about its political intentions

The logic of its vision of justice at work leads not to an open society but to an application of its violent means in solving other 'anti democratic' problems in overseas adventures, like Vietnam. And that was a logic the civil rights leaders who advocated communal non violence had already foreseen and firmly denounced ■

CRITICS BEST AND WORST

Dirty Dozen

THE OIRTY DOZEN IS YOUR CHANCE TO CATCH UP ON WHAT FILM WRITERS AROUHO AUSTRALIA ARE THIHKIHG. A PAHEL OF LEAOIHG FILM VIEWERS HAVE RATEO TWELVE OF THE LATEST RELEASES OH A SCALE OF OHE TO TEH – TEH REIHG THE OPTIMUM RATIHG. THE CRITICS ARE: RILL COLLIHS (CHAHHEL 10, OAILY MIRROR), KETH COHHOLLY (MELROURHE HERALO), JOHN FLAUS (3RRR MELROURHE, AGE ENTERTAINMEHT GUIOE), SAHORA HALL (THE BULLETIH), PAUL HARRIS (3RR MELBOURNE, AGE EHTERTAIHMEHT GUIOE) PHILIPPA HAWKER (CIHEMA PAPERS), JOHH HIHOE (ARC RAOIO/TV), IVAH HUTCHIHSON (HSV 7, TV WEEK), STAH JAMES (AOELAIOE AOVERTISER), NEIL JILLETT (MELROURHE AGE), TIHA KAUFMAH (FILMHEWS), OOUGAL MACOOHALO (CAHRERRA TIMES), AORIAH MARTIH (XPRESS,TENSIOH), MICHAEL VAH HIEKERK (THE WEST AUSTRALIAH), TOM RYAH (3LO: RAMOHA KOVAL SHOW), OAVIO STRATTOH (SRS: THE MOVIE SHOW, VARIETY), AHO EVAH WILLIAMS (THE AUSTRALIAH).

RAIN MAN

Bill Collins	9
Keith Connolly	7
John Flaus	–
Paul Harris	1
Sandra Hall	7
Philippa Hawker	-
John Hinde	8
Ivan Hutchinson	5
Stan James	8
Neil Jillett	2
Tina Kaufman	7
Dougal Macdonald	8
Adrian Martin	1
Michael van Niekerk	8
Tom Ryan	6
David Stratton	9
Evan Williams	6

WOMEN ON THE VERGE

Bill Collins	9
Keith Connolly	8
John Flaus	8
Paul Harris	2
Sandra Hall	8
Philippa Hawker	5
John Hinde	8
Ivan Hutchinson	7
Stan James	-
Neil Jillett	6
Tina Kaufman	8
Dougal Macdonald	9
Adrian Martin	8
Michael van Niekerk	-
Tom Ryan	8
David Stratton	7
Evan Williams	-

BIRO

Bill Collins	8
Keith Connolly	9
John Flaus	-
Paul Harris	6
Sandra Hall	7
Philippa Hawker	8
John Hinde	7
Ivan Hutchinson	6
Stan James	
Neil Jillett	7
Tina Kaufman	
Dougal Macdonald	8
Adrian Martin	9
Michael van Niekerk	
Tom Ryan	
David Stratton	-
Evan Williams	

MISSISSIPPI BURNING

Bill Collins	8
Keith Connolly	7
John Flaus	5
Paul Harris	3
Sandra Hall	7
Philippa Hawker	4
John Hinde	7
Ivan Hutchinson	7
Stan James	7
Neil Jillett	4
Tina Kaufman	7
Dougal Macdonald	–
Adrian Martin	-
Michael van Niekerk	8
Tom Ryan	5
David Stratton	8
Evan Williams	-

EMERALO CITY

Bill Collins	7
Keith Connolly	8
John Flaus	
Paul Harris	1
Sandra Hall	8
Philippa Hawker	4
John Hinde	5
Ivan Hutchinson	6
Stan James	-
Neil Jillett	7
Tina Kaufman	7
Dougal Macdonald	-
Adrian Martin	1
Michael van Niekerk	–
Tom Ryan	-
David Stratton	5
Evan Williams	5

RUNNING ON EMPTY

Bill Collins	
Keith Connolly	9
John Flaus	7
Paul Harris	7
Sandra Hall	-
Philippa Hawker	-
John Hinde	–
Ivan Hutchinson	7
Stan James	-
Neil Jillett	8
Tina Kaufman	9
Dougal Macdonald	-
Adrian Martin	7
Michael van Niekerk	-
Tom Ryan	7
David Stratton	7
Evan Williams	-

TEQUILA SUNRISE

Bill Collins	8
Keith Connolly	4
John Flaus	
Paul Harris	3
Sandra Hall	6
Philippa Hawker	8
John Hinde	4
Ivan Hutchinson	2
Stan James	3
Neil Jillett	3
Tina Kaufman	8
Dougal Macdonald	8
Adrian Martin	7
Michael van Niekerk	5
Tom Ryan	–
David Stratton	5
Evan Williams	–

THE ACCUSED

Bill Collins	7
Keith Connolly	6
John Flaus	5
Paul Harris	7
Sandra Hall	8
Philippa Hawker	5
John Hinde	6
Ivan Hutchinson	8
Stan James	7
Neil Jillett	1
Tina Kaufman	8
Dougal Macdonald	7
Adrian Martin	8
Michael van Niekerk	
Tom Ryan	6
David Stratton	8
Evan Williams	4

YOUNG EINSTEIN

Bill Collins	8
Keith Connolly	7
John Flaus	5
Paul Harris	1
Sandra Hall	6
Philippa Hawker	7
John Hinde	9
Ivan Hutchinson	3
Stan James	6
Neil Jillett	8 5
Tina Kaufman	4
Dougal Macdonald	9
Adrian Martin	2
Michael van Niekerk	8
Tom Ryan	–
David Stratton	6
Evan Williams	5

ALIEN NATION

Bill Collins	7
Keith Connolly	–
John Flaus	-
Paul Harris	1
Sandra Hall	4
Philippa Hawker	–
John Hinde	6
Ivan Hutchinson	4
Stan James	2
Neil Jillett	4
Tina Kaufman	6
Dougal Macdonald	5
Adrian Martin	5
Michael van Niekerk	6
Tom Ryan	-
David Stratton	7
Evan Williams	5

NIGHTMARE ON ELM ST. IV

Bill Collins	6
Keith Connolly	
John Flaus	-
Paul Harris	3
Sandra Hall	–
Philippa Hawker	-
John Hinde	6
Ivan Hutchinson	2
Stan James	1
Neil Jillett	–
Tina Kaufman	-
Dougal Macdonald	-
Adrian Martin	5
Michael van Niekerk	3
Tom Ryan	-
David Stratton	5
Evan Williams	–

COLONEL BLIMP RETROSPECTIVE

Bill Collins	10
Keith Connolly	9
John Flaus	10
Paul Harris	9
Sandra Hall	–
Philippa Hawker	9
John Hinde	-
Ivan Hutchinson	8
Stan James	–
Neil Jillett	7
Tina Kaufman	8
Dougal Macdonald	9
Adrian Martin	9
Michael van Niekerk	–
Tom Ryan	7
David Stratton	9
Evan Williams	9

TEQUILA: AVERAGE RATING 6.1

NOBODY ON THE TRAIL OF A MYSTERIOUS TELEKINETIC ASSASSIN: AVERAGE RAT NG 7.3

***THIS ISSUE:* ANOTHER WOMAN; CELIA; DEAD CALM; DISTANT VOICES, STILL LIVES; EMERALD CITY; MY GIRLFRIEND'S BOYFRIEND; TALK RADIO AND LUIGI'S LADIES.**

***ANOTHER WOMAN:* THE ALLEN NEUROSIS IS THAT HE'S A FUNNY MAN CAUGHT INSIDE A SERIOUS INTELLECTUAL WHO COULDN'T HELP BUT MAKE FILMS. OR IS HE A SERIOUS INTELLECTUAL TRAPPED INSIDE A FUNNY MAN WHO FOUND FILMMAKING BEYOND HIS CONTROL? ABOVE: MARTHA PLIMPTON AND GENA ROWLANDS. INSET: WOODY ALLEN LOOKING ALL SCREWED UP.**

ANOTHER WOMAN

I wrote more specials for Sid and Art, but I had no real interest in TV writing after I got over the glamour. I wanted to be a playwright. I kept going to the theatre and reading books. Then a funny thing happened. I began to come up with comedy ideas that could only be expressed in monologues.

WOODY ALLEN *From On Being Funny: Woody Allen & Comedy*, 1975. by Eric Lax.

A lot of people want Woody Allen to be a funny guy as much as they might like Martin Scorsese to remain a raging bull or Clint Eastwood to stay a Dirty Harry. Fortunately, these directors share a common integrity in their work which, to my mind, springs from their potential to exercise and develop the range of their cinematic and directorial prose. It may happen that fame, wealth and reputation give them the freedom not to be who we, as an audience, would like them to be (for us). When it comes down to it, John Cassavetes was probably the most uncompromised filmmaker in America but, then again, from his earliest work, Cassavetes appears to have known exactly what the conditions of his filmmaking were and he never succumbed to fame or wealth. He got over the glamour before he ever really ran into it.

But it is rare to come across auteurism that knows its own destiny before it even hits the road. Woody Allen started out as a funny man, doing advertising, working as a nightclub comedian, making funny films, making New York films, making less funny films, serious films, theatrical films, plus a lot of other fictions in between.

In some senses this review is a defence of this other Woody Allen, the Woody Allen of serious theatrical convention and deep, morbid soul searching. Like his character Zelig, Allen has multiple personalities. The notion of a singular self or form is foreign to him. In 1978 *Interiors* shocked fans after their deafening accolades for the 1977 release of *Annie Hall*. *Interiors* is Bergman via Ibsen and Strindberg, noted Tim Pulleine in the *Monthly Film Bulletin* (July 1988). *September*, he points out, has protagonists inspired by Eugene O'Neill and Arthur Miller. The film is claustrophobic to the max. Raymond Durgnat, in his critical essay "Next Time You Say That – Smile," (*MFB* September 1988) said that *Hannah and Her Sisters* modulated between one liner gag comedy and near tragic dramatic melancholy. He called *Annie Hall* a comedy of Greenwich Village manners and a dramatic love lyric with heavy introversion interest (what Durgnat considers the Allen neurosis). The Allen neurosis is that he's a funny man caught inside a serious intellectual who couldn't help but make films. Or is he a serious intellectual trapped inside a funny man who found filmmaking beyond his control?

Whatever metamorphosis he's undergoing, Allen cares little for the fan club that salutes perpetual funniness. The last two additions to the Allen filmography, *September* and *Another Woman*, belong to a serious tradition where dramatic action is predicated on theatrical convention. If there are moments of comic relief, and I believe there are, these moments are biting and lean, incising the common 'anhedonia' that runs a savage course through the lives of these heady, educated people. (Anhedonia means "absence of the feeling of pleasure in situations where it is normally present", according to James Monaco in *American Film Now*.)

For me, *Another Woman* is a film that uses the bourgeois sensibility and turns it against itself for illuminating ends to make some qualitative statement about the life of bourgeois intellectuals. Allen aesthetically and stylistically downgrades the bourgeois sensibility by depicting it earnestly through its own lens: muted browns, sepia greens, rusted reds – the aesthetics of a class rationalized in dreary taste and insensitive to their own passionless moments.

Another Woman is framed around the story (delivered in the form of a monologue – one of Allen's favourite devices) of a philosophy professor who slowly but emphatically discovers, admits to and takes the consequences of a life beleaguered with emotional deception. As Marion, Gena Rowlands gives a fascinating and inspired performance. For an actor who has played characters at the mercy of their emotions (eg. in Cassavetes' *A Woman Under the Influence*, *Gloria* and *Love Streams*), Rowlands is brilliant as an intellectual who has never fully considered the consequences of her overtly cerebral life.

Although I see a strong cynical slant in *Another Woman*, I feel it is worth defending, mainly because of the power of Rowlands' final scene. Having realized the terrible gulf that sums up her existence, Rowlands discards her tasteful but neutral autumnal tones to wear a black dress. Consequently the stern and severe look on her face disappears, and is replaced by something softer. Here is a haunting cinematic moment. The softness seems to be an extension of the Faulkner/Godard reference on the choice between grief and nothing. Rowlands' character is pleased that she has studied and assimilated the nothingness of her life. She is happier to know and reflect upon her sad loneliness which, in my book, means that she may be capable of great feelings as opposed to none at all. The power of this final scene is connected to the obvious symbolism of Allen's more theatrical/European films. Marion's black dress reveals a mourning for a lost life, whereas, in *Interiors*, Pearl's red dress stands for life's blood, pure passion. The great irony, and perhaps the deepest cut from the Woody Allen knife, is that Marion discovers what we've known all along: that life is not in books, that her need to take control of her fate and drive it towards a correct and proper destination has, indeed, taken control of her. Her desire to be free has incarcerated her in a prison of self deception.

It could be that if this film were made by someone called Woodina Allen, it might be hailed as a document betraying the tenets or the dream of American bourgeois feminism. There is a slight hint that Allen may be coming down hard on the Seventies feminist inspired aim of self determination, seeing it as the site of a barren intellectual battlefield (for example, Marion's headstrong desire not to have children, in order to retain the components of the self, or the suicide in later life of her first husband). There is no defence for such a point of view, but I feel Allen is onto something else. Marion is an intelligent woman. She made sophisticated decisions that gave her no feelings of a fecund, primitive altruism. She lives with regret because she did not gamble on bigger things than herself: her desire was to retain one self at any cost. This is a frightening notion and I, for one, applaud Mr Allen for daring to speak it.

SHELLEY KAY

Another Woman directed by Woody Allen. Producer: Robert Greenhut. Executive producers: Jack Rollins, Charles H. Joffe. Associate producers: Thomas Reilly, Helen Robin. Script: Woody Allen. Director of photography: Sven Nykvist. Editor: Susan E. Morse. Production designer: Santo Loquasto. Cast: Gena Rowlands (Marion), Mia Farrow (Hope), Ian Holm (Ken), Blythe Danner (Lydia), Gene Hackman (Larry), Betty Buckley (Kathy), Martha Plimpton (Laura), John Houseman (Marion's dad), Sandy Dennis (Claire). Production company: Jack Rollins/Charles H. Joffe. Distributor: Village Roadshow. 35mm. 84 mins. USA 1988.

CELIA

At first sight, this is just another simple film about growing up. Somewhere in suburban Melbourne in the late 1950s Celia turns nine years old, and starts the long summer holidays. She leads one of the local gangs, and the other is led by Stephanie, the daughter of her father's best friend, who also happens to be the local police sergeant. The rival gangs hurl names at each other and conduct mock battles with flour bombs in the local quarry.

So far, it sounds like many another children's film, designed to evoke in adults nostalgic memories of the whiling away of idle summer days. But this is a film *about* childhood rather than a children's film, and the nostalgic memories it evokes are at best ambiguous, and at worst painfully disturbing. It deserves its 'M' rating, and will need careful marketing to reach the adult audience that will really appreciate it.

First, the children are not innocent: naive, and often helpless against older people in authority over them, but neither unaware nor passively accepting. And they are not presented in black-and-white terms either. Rebecca Smart, at the ripe old age of 12, is a seasoned actress, familiar to audiences from numerous film and television roles and particularly her co-starring role with Bryan Brown in the television mini-series *The Shiralee*. Her long blonde plaits and cheeky freckled face could have been used to present the stereotypical mischievous but charming misfit that we have known since Tom Sawyer. But Celia is much more complex than that.

She has the only child's dependence on 'special' adults (first her grandmother and then the mother of the family next door), and on the world of the imagination. But her imagination tends to the macabre. After granny's death, her surprisingly substantial ghost appears reassuringly at odd intervals, in the garden or sitting on her chair in the middle of the wasteland of the quarry. Similarly, the hobyahs, who have tiptoed across the imagination of many a victim of the *Australian School Readers*, have a physical presence in Celia's life, appearing at unguarded moments, in the darker parts of the garden or as a slimy hand over the window sill at night. Her terror of them is only temporarily held at bay by her mother's taking her out into the garden with a torch to show her the brushtail possum who makes the horrible noises that spark off her nightmarish fantasies. When she cannot make the world behave as she would wish, she resorts to voodoo, sticking pins into dolls that represent the 'villains' of her world – Stephanie, the sergeant and her own father.

CELIA: A FILM ABOUT CHILDHOOD RATHER THAN A CHILDREN'S FILM. THE MEMORIES IT EVOKES ARE AT BEST AMBIGUOUS, AND AT WORST PAINFUL AND DISTURBING.
LEFT: NICHOLAS EADIE AS RAY, AND REBECCA SMART AS CELIA

For Celia has to cope not only with her peers and her fantasies, but with an adult world that seems quite without logic or natural justice. It is a world in which children's pets are rounded up as a threat to the nation's agriculture, and good people are persecuted for their beliefs. Parents are not to be relied upon, either to explain this confusion or to help a child find a safe route through it. Celia's parents do the best they can in the circumstances, but her father is unable to shake off his rigid dogmatism, it is her mother, who over the course of the film manages to reshape her values and attitudes, who can eventually support Celia through the crisis.

So, clearly, but not in an overstated way, this is a political film. At its world premiere in the Panorama section of the Berlin Film Fesoval, this side of the film was well received, and implications drawn from it that the director had not anticipated – including a reference to the rabbit enclosure at the zoo as a "concentration camp for rabbits". Indeed, although the 'rabbit menace' and the 'red menace' are quite separate threads of the story, the parallels provide amusing relief from what could have been much more chilling.

Politics was the aspect of the film that was subject to most criticism during its five year gestation, and its passage through many script drafts. It was probably all to the good that the details of the internal bickering in the Communist Party over events in Hungary were finally omitted, for what remains sums up beautifully the ambivalences and insecurities within the political left and the paranoia outside it. Celia's child's eye view shows up the bigotry of the period, and with hindsight we cringe at its futility.

It is a most impressive feature film debut for writer/director Ann Turner. After training at Swinburne, and receiving the school's Best Screenplay Award for her graduation film, *Flesh on Glass*, she spent five years developing the script for *Celia* while working outside feature production, mostly in the film bureaucracy. There are some signs that it is a first feature: there is an occasional lapse in the flow of the complex narrative, and it suffers from the Australian habit of having more than one ending (although the final ending is particularly compelling). But, as a director, Ann Turner has obtained uniformly good performances from the adult actors and quite miraculous ones from the team of children. It will probably do well with audiences – after all, we have all been children. Celia survives her initiation into the adult world of violence, deceit and compromise, but at a cost. It is this cost that viewers may well find themselves identifying with most strongly.

INA BERTRAND

Celia. Directed by Ann Turner. Producers: Timothy White, Gordon Glenn. Executive producer: Bryce Menzies. Associate producer: Ian Pringle. Script: Ann Turner. Director of photography: Geoffrey Simpson. Editor: Ken Sallows. Production designer: Peta Lawson. Music: Chris Neal. Cast: Rebecca Smart (Celia), Nicholas Eadie (Ray), Marianne Fahey (Pat), Victoria Longley (Alice), William Zappa (Uncle John), Deborra Lee Furness (Teacher). Production company: Seon Films. Distributor: Hoyts. 35mm. 102 mins. Australia 1988.

DEAD CALM

It is rare to praise an Australian film uninhibitedly, but *Dead Calm* is one such film: it stands its ground with fine works such as the Mad Max triptych and *Summerfield*. It has a quality that many local filmmakers fail to recognize and appreciate: it demonstrates the makers' ability to recognize a good story with a universal feel and to produce a film with wide audience appeal.

Based on Charles Williams' novel of the same name, *Dead Calm* was originally bought by Orson

DEAD CALM USES LANDSCAPE WITHOUT CLICHED CONNOTATIONS OF 'AUSTRALIANNESS' WHAT IS AUSTRALIAN — IS ITS PECULIAR BLEND OF FRIENDLINESS, (DIS)TRUST AND XENOPHOBIA. ABOVE: NICOLE KIDMAN AND SHOTGUN

Welles and renamed *The Deep*. He abandoned it in 1973, owing to the death of a lead actor and Welles' characteristic doubts about the material he had shot. The rights were picked up by Kennedy Miller productions and director Phil Noyce in 1986.

Dead Calm has certain similarities to Robert Harmon's *The Hitcher* – a comparable plot and a similar rites of passage theme. John and Rae Ingram (Sam Neill and Nicole Kidman) are on a sailing holiday at the Great Barrier Reef in their boat, the "Saracen", they are trying to forget the tragic and brutal death of their son. From another boat, the "Orpheus", they pick up an ocean hitch-hiker called Hughie (Billy Zane), who is out of his mind. The couple's previous emotional preoccupations are abruptly overshadowed by the stranger's psychotic behaviour. As in Harmon's film, the hitcher is a man with no obvious past and very little regard for the lives of others.

As Rae, Nicole Kidman is reminiscent of Sigourney Weaver in *Aliens* – less robust, and hardly single-minded in her determination to overcome the invader, but hanging in there, albeit by the skin of her teeth. Unlike Ripley, Rae is not aware of the real danger that faces her and she does not have the world-weary, suspicious outlook her husband has developed after 25 years at sea. Left alone with Hughie when her husband goes to see what has happened on board the "Orpheus", Rae defends herself with cunning rather than strong-willed self-protection. Her battle with Hughie resembles the test of personality that is fought between C. Thomas Howell and Rutger Hauer in *The Hitcher*. Her lesson echoes a line from Roeg's *Eureka* – "It's not over till it's over." Hughie has impenetrable powers of survival.

Dead Calm was shot by Dean Semler, whose screen credits include *Razorback*, *Mad Max II* and *Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome*. In the Mad Max films, and here in *Dead Calm*, he establishes landscape as another player in the scenario. The expansive and apparently pacific waters of Australia's Great Barrier Reef are shot with great tenderness. The wonderful aerial photography of the "Orpheus" and "Saracen" in *Dead Calm* is landscape painting at its best, contemplating open space as both sinister and transfixing.

Like the Mad Max films, *Dead Calm* also uses landscape without cliched connotations of Australianness. What is Australian in this film is in its latent content: a peculiar blend of friendliness, (dis)trust and xenophobia. The ocean hitcher who wreaks havoc on the lives of the Australian couple is an American. The actor, Billy Zane, has some resemblance to Marlon Brando and like Ray Liotta in *Something Wild* and Rutger Hauer in *The Hitcher*, he has the ability to play a bad guy and do it well. The charm of evil seduces us, and we are fascinated with the extremism of absolute malice.

Terry Hayes' script is economical: its simplicity, however, does not stand up to the best films in the suspense genre. The John Ingram character is wasted for great parts of the film, although Sam Neill gives him a little more depth than the script may have allowed for. Perhaps he could have faced more horrors. This could have helped reinforce the obvious danger his wife is to encounter with Hughie and would have generally contributed to the build up of tension created when Rae consistently fails to trap or destroy her pursuer. The film definitely suffers from her failure to perceive her danger and take decisive action. This flaw is redeemed, however, when she sets the boat on course in high seas to recover her husband. The power of the cinematography during these moments is breathtaking.

Aboard the "Orpheus" John Ingram fixes the electrical supply, setting off maddening home videos shot by Hughie. These video 'flashbacks' are an economical way to depict the highly strung hysteria and sexual perversity of the Americans travelling on the "Orpheus" with the psychotic Hughie. The American voices are monotonous and claustrophobic, which increases the maddening effect of the device. (For a few seconds you might empathize with Hughie's need to rid himself of his cruising buddies.) The soundtrack uses some very good music scored by Graeme Revell from SPK but it sometimes intrudes upon the film, undercutting the suspense rather than highlighting it.

Apart from these minor points, *Dead Calm* is an exceptionally entertaining film which I hope will follow the path of other commercial successes such as *Gallipoli*, *Crocodile Dundee*, *Mad Max* and *Newsfront*. A *Dead Calm* should do better than a *High Tide* at the box office.

SHELLEY KAY

Dead Calm directed by Phillip Noyce. Producers: Terry Hayes, Doug Mitchell, George Miller. Script: Terry Hayes. Director of photography: Dean Semler. Editor: Richard Francis-Bruce. Production designer: Graham 'Grace' Walker. Music: Graeme Revell. Cast: Sam Neill (John Ingram), Nicole Kidman (Rae Ingram), Billy Zane (Hughie), Rod Mullinar (Russell Bellows), Joshua Tilden (Danny), George Shevtsov (doctor), Michael Long (specialist doctor). Production company: Kennedy Miller. Distributor: Village Roadshow. 35mm. 95 mins. Aust. 1989.

DISTANT VOICES, STILL LIVES

Once in a blue moon a movie comes out which challenges the conventional ideas of cinema as an art form and, concomitantly, the prevailing aesthetic and cultural rationale of the national film culture from which it has emerged. When we consider that it is British cinema we are talking about, then such a work is all the more miraculous. The movie in question is Terence Davies' *Distant Voices, Still Lives*. If Truffaut were alive today to see Davies' harrowing autobiographical narrative about a Liverpool working class family in the Forties and Fifties, he would probably feel obliged to qualify his now famous observation that the British cinema is a contradiction in terms.

Whether we agree with Truffaut's extreme view is a matter for debate, but Davies' splendid Proustian homage to his family and to a bygone England where there was once a gentle sense of community at the centre of things, is a rare exception to the general truth of Truffaut's statement that many British movies exhibit a poverty of passion and are nothing more than filmed theatre.

Davies' deft capacity to create a movie motivated by a strong cinephilic awareness of genre, mise-en-scene, performance and character is demonstrably evident when we contextualize *Distant Voices, Still Lives* in the present landscape of British mainstream cinema. Time and again the spectator encounters finely chiselled, evocative images and sounds that form a moving, stylized film of subtle gestures, rhythms and movements in tandem with vivid emotions that speak of universal significance. As a filmmaker critical of his British peers who valorize the spoken word as the chief concern of narrative cinema, Davies is not alone: directors like Powell and Pressburger, Petit, Greenaway, Roeg and Jarman share his oppositional stance towards the shortcomings of British feature films.

But what also operates throughout the conceptual and visual architecture of the movie is a profoundly sensitive understanding of its brutalized but not defeated characters in terms of memory, identity, violence, ritual and community. Davies' expressive ability to construct a movie of enormous emotional impact and visual sophistication hinges on the director's deep seated need to listen to the distant voices of his characters' memories and represent the stasis of their 'still' lives.

As a life affirming, non-linear work, *Distant Voices* eschews sentimentality in its delineation of a working class family characterized by its almost schizophrenic emotional mixture of violence and affection. What we have here is the director's *Sturm und Drang* approach to the thematic and stylistic complexities that shape the cultural, emotional and temporal topography of autobiographical cinema. In addition, the movie's dreamlike realism explicitly makes a critique of the 'kitchen sink' genre of British cinema by employing a specifically cinematic directorial style that intelligently affirms film as film. It is a realism that questions the overwhelmingly popular, theatrically-defined movies that simply record people talking.

Davies has given us a fluid narrative that is interested in generating an adventurous conception of film fiction and a diegetic space for the objects, customs, rituals and visual indexes of a practically vanished popular culture that was central to the English working class 30 years ago. The movie is particularly rich in detail concerning the intricate emotional and cultural connections between a family, country and society during a specific epoch.

Davies' minimalist economy of expression has a rigour reminiscent of Bresson. His spare, family album memories of nightmares and traumas colour the movie's diptych structure. Another significant quality is Davies' ability to write a script that resonates with sensitive textual significance on so many interrelated levels concerned with theme, character, style and tone. In *Distant Voices, Still*

Lives we meet characters who are propelled by pure, intense emotions, contradictory and dislocating feelings There has been a tremendous effort made to sketch the inability of the child's and adult's mind to come to terms with the emotional scars and ambiguity of childhood Davies is saying to us that life, particularly as it has been moulded by childhood, is a mysterious mosaic of emotional, historical and cultural forces that always seems to be beyond the reach of logic and reason Yet it is not as hopeless as it may seem there is joy to be found in our darkness The critical point to grasp here is the filmmaker's insistence that our world is governed by a continual clash between despair and happiness

The film's range of gently brilliant ochres, tea-coloured browns and earth colours corresponds graphically to the emotional contours of the storyline moreover, its generic hybridism – part comedy, part tragedy, part musical, part animated family album and part lament for a certain England that once cared about community values – is indicative of its profound originality

Its first part, *Distant Voices*, introduces us to Davies' anguished family there is the father (Pete Postlethwaite), a sadistic patriarch who is portrayed in several scenes as someone capable of tenderness, the mother (Freda Dowie) who is, in the words of Thomas Elsaesser, "a monument to mute suffering and brutal humiliation", enduring her husband's bashings whilst looking after her three children There is Eileen (Angela Walsh) who is beaten by her father with a broom, her good hearted sister Maisie (Lorraine Ashbourne) and finally, their raging brother Tony (Dean Williams) who smashes a window with his fist *Distant Voices* concentrates on the children's struggle to locate love inside and outside the family The second part, *Still Lives*, is more hopeful than the first part; the children are now adults, both Eileen and Maisie are married and Tony is getting engaged

Visually, *Distant Voices, Still Lives* is full of virtuoso passages displaying a long take visual stylization that reminds the spectator again and again that this movie is a movie about filmmaking as much as it is about memory Its soaring crane shots would not be out of place in a Minnelli, Ophuls or Welles movie Several come to mind in one scene the camera ascends to the second floor bedroom window of the family's terraced house at night, then the shot changes into a reverse interior of the window filled with daylight as we hear a softly articulated voice off say, "I loved the light nights " In another astonishingly subtle scene we follow the camera, rising from a rain drenched dome of umbrellas to a rooftop poster of *Love Is a Many Splendoured Thing*, then swooping low over the sniffling, captivated audience

The movie's *tableau vivant* groupings are rendered in an elliptical visual style where days or hours are magically telescoped into a single shot Finally, typical of Davies' movie, characters sing directly at us with no accompaniment and no valid narrative justification *Distant Voices, Still Lives* is a path breaking work, particularly in relation to British narrative film practice

JOHN CONGDON

Distant Voices, Still Lives directed by Terence Davies Producer Jennifer Howarth Executive producer Colin MacCabe Script Terence Davies Directors of photography William Diver, Patrick Duval Editor William Diver Production designers Miki van Zwanenberg Jocelyn James Cast Freda Dowie (Mother) Pete Postlethwaite (Father), Angela Walsh (Eileen), Dean Williams (Tony) Lorraine Ashbourne (Maisie), Debi Jones (Micki) Marie Jellinan (Jingles) Production company British Film Institute/Film Four International Distributor Dendy Films 35mm 84 mins UK 1988

EMERALD CITY

Plays are notoriously difficult to adapt to the screen The problem is that the cinema delivers its insights through means other than words – through its visuals, its montage, its recall of previous constructions In contrast, plays are best at revealing the complexities of social relationships through dialogue Unless honed to a sharp accuracy, words derail film's visual syntheses

For some time now David Williamson has attempted to overcome this problem by writing plays and seeing them produced as though they were screenplays Abrupt, honed down dialogue, narrative speed, the use of a narrating voiceover, abbreviated scenes which switch restlessly from character to character – these are cinematic qualities On stage, *Emerald City* performs like a screenplay On film, its characters deliver lines at a speed to disprove its wordy origins Yet there is, interestingly, a divided allegiance in its text which favours exactly the kind of film it is not It's in cinematic terms that this screen adaptation offers its most interesting statement

DISTANT VOICES, STILL LIVES: IF TRUFFAUT WERE ALIVE TODAY TO SEE DAVIES' HARROWING AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NARRATIVE... HE WOULD PROBABLY FEEL OBLIGED TO QUALIFY HIS NOW FAMOUS OBSERVATION THAT THE BRITISH CINEMA IS A CONTRADICTION IN TERMS. ABOVE: ANGELA WALSH ANSWERS A CALL TO ARMS.

At one level of interpretation Williamson's theme is an Australian version of the Faust legend Colin Rogers (John Hargreaves) and his wife Kate (Robyn Nevin) abandon Melbourne for Sydney. The boot of his car is full of screenplay awards but he finds the middle-class pretensions of Melbourne repressive, while Sydney allures by its career potential and its physical energies There is no mention of the main reason for the mass migration of Melbourne writers to Sydney in the late Seventies the establishment of the Australia Council and Film Commission, with their attendant grants and perks, in Tinsel Town Thus is to be a story about integrity and its temptations by the forces of free enterprise, not a study of the banalities of government patronage. Colin must set out on his moral journey relatively naive about the more coercive procedures of our culture

EMERALD CITY: THERE IS SOMETHING MAWKISHLY UNSATISFACTORY IN WATCHING THE AUTHOR TELL US THE STORY OF HIS OWN HONESTY. IT'S LIKE WATCHING HIM SWIM THROUGH THE SHARK POOL AND THEN HAVING HIM ROAST OF HOW HE ALMOST GOT BITTEN.

His Mephistopheles is Mike McCord (Chris Haywood), an ambitious, sleazy operator working the fringes of the film industry, who is on the lookout for a way to crack the big overseas markets through a parasitic partnership with genuine talent As with Marlowe's Faust, his means of enticing Colin are a handy combination – encouraging his ambition to be a successful producer, and sex

At the Sydney Film Festival Colin is first approached by Mike's glamorous and intelligent mistress, Helen (Nicole Kidman) Bored with his marriage, fed up with playing househusband to his two children while his wife works at a publishing job to support them (surely they don't need the money on his substantial royalties?) he sees in Helen the potential gratification of a soul mate/sex partner

Helen's role as temptress is not only ambiguous, it is downright confused As a focus of both temptation and self esteem (she just loves Colin's writing) her private motives and goals are continually obfuscated by Williamson's script She is well-read, highly intelligent, responds to and promotes quality films – she recommends to Colin the work of a visiting Polish director because of his sensitive handling of the theme of 'manliness' – yet she remains with McCord, an unredeemable male chauvinist, because his potential for success excites her sexually and holds out the promise of the little material dreams (a trip to Venice, a house with a harbour view) she is greedy for

It is impossible to resolve these contradictions since this is a film about male menopause and she is simply everything to both men The only figure who appears to balance the conflict in Colin's mind – he confesses he is fed up with the pain of being an artist, longs for the security of commercial success to sustain him in his old age(!) – is his wife Kate At first cynical of his growing artistic involvement with the money hungry McCord, she too is slowly seduced by the opportunities for career success (the successful promotion of an Aboriginal novel) and extra-marital gratification (while in Britain to secure the Booker Prize) In fact as Colin learns to renounce his demons, his wife just as spuriously invites them in

Life in the Faust lane is, according to Williamson, full of fluctuating souls who continually surrender themselves to conflicting modes of selfishness/integrity Even the vulgarian McCord suddenly declares himself willing to take a turn at writing and producing a quality film His subsequent career is built on his reputation as the co-author of Colin's integrity-haunted but commercially disastrous TV drama, *Coast Watchers*, a film "about our past, a film about heroes" There is a little bit of redemption, it seems, in the most fiendishly opportunistic operators But priority of place must go to the lonely self-humiliating artist

In a revealing scene between Colin and his agent, Elaine (Ruth Cracknell), McCord must be allowed no creative talent of his own not only because, in the middle class mind, creativity and crassness can't go together, but also because, as Colin admits with relief, McCord has no talent with words The thrust of McCord's filmmaking abilities throughout has been not on the text, but on the cinematic image "If you rely on body language, gestures and grunts," Colin says, face-

tiously deriding these alternative means, "then you may as well be making movies about chimpanzees." Colin's snobbish rejection of popular culture is part of his 'suffering' writer baggage.

Everyone in the industry loves a good film and if you can find the golden seam that weds commercial with artistic success, you're onto a winner. That at least is the implication of the film's last shot, a freeze frame of both couples walking, in friendly competition, out of the State Theatre. It's an ending which squeamishly sidesteps the resolution of the conflict I've been describing. Even a Williamson script needs commercial backers.

The centre of the battle for integrity is of course Colin. It is made clear that this is, in spite of his denials, a portrait of Williamson himself. He's a successful scriptwriter transferred to Sydney who has won awards for a film about the Anzacs and another with a title very similar to a famous compilation about the Whitlam years to which Williamson was a prominent contributor. The struggle we are invited to watch is not one in which Faust loses out to the seductions of power and success. Not a tragedy or even a comedy, but the narcissistic reaffirmation of Williamson's own self-esteem. Of all the characters, including his agent, only Williamson's alter ego Colin comes through unsedduced as, rising to the heights of his moral lucidity, he declares McCord a harlot and rejects his offer of $150,000 to adapt the Aboriginal novel which is the central cause of Kate's seduction both commercially and physically.

There is in fact something mawkishly unsatisfactory in watching the author tell us the story of his own honesty. It's like watching him swim through the shark pool called Sydney and cling at last to the shallow end, boasting of how he *almost* got bitten.

If there is any value in this thoroughly Melbourne text "All my screenplays are about middle class pricks", it is the cinematic values that Owen Williams, the production designer, has managed to inject into it.

In the Venetian art of the Renaissance, paintings were often carefully colour coded to communicate the passions experienced by the subjects of the paintings. By similar means a subliminal text is introduced by Williams into what is otherwise a confused account of its major themes.

The keys are the colours yellow and blue which, mixed in the correct proportions, produce emerald green. Their separation and distinctiveness in the overall filmic design thus colour code the main themes, commercialism and integrity.

Ruth Cracknell's harbour view office, for example, is a symphony of blue tones signifying the high rise success Colin seeks. This coding, however, isn't a simplistic indicator. The agent is continually imploring Colin to write something that continues the success of his previous integrally honest works. During Film Festival time the State Theatre lover is garishly yellow, a crass world of pretended adherence to cinema and shady business deals in the corner. There, Colin's seduction by Helen is distinguished by her colour code, from her carrot bright hair to shoes a vision in chrome plated yellow. If she graduates in the final scenes to a vivid red this can only signify that she has revealed herself as a more old fashioned if sexier kind of harlot.

But if blue signifies the cinema of integrity while yellow marks out the commercial world, it doesn't end there. McCord's various apartments are appropriately marked out in yellow throughout. As he grows more successful, however, the colour is leached out, becomes white while the yellow motif is reduced to the lampshades. Does this indicate that the international scene he has broken into – he is set up by a Satanic merchant banker in Los Angeles – is more a question of black and white, a different story whose set he returns from to the local scene.

In perhaps the most witty colour reference, in a scene where McCord attempts to seduce Colin's

agent, Elaine, into giving him the job of writing a high class film script, he is wearing a brilliant blue bow tie, appropriated as a cynical entrance fee into this more integral world.

While Colin's surroundings begin as monotonously yellow, in this case signifying middle class comfort and therefore a direct connection with the commercial world he hopes to break into, the patterns about him gradually change. His workroom is a dappled well of yellows and blues while the Rogers' bedroom where the couple have a habit of speaking the truth to each other is streaked with blue shadows. Thus the cinema of integrity, artistic success and adhesion to personal values are linked. But in the scene where Colin asserts his ethical code over McCord's temptation to commercialize the Aboriginal novel *Black Rage*, he and his workroom are all in blue – affirmation of his return to a superior artistic world that can't conjugate with McCord's crass yellow. A last moment of wavering in his resolve is corrected by his son, dressed in blue school clothes. Innocence guarded by self regard are the concomitants of his ethical position.

Colin/Williamson thus has travelled from public to private world, from harbour view desired to personal isolated integrity reaffirmed, home grown Aussie values, in his stated opinion, which invest and strengthen his creativity. Buried in all of this is a debate about Australia's culture and its relationship not only to international market forces but also to the worldwide debate called 'culture'. Cultural cringe called 'nationalism' or cultural colonization in the form of America or Japan or the prevalent world power?

It's the implication of this wider conflict in the exchanges between McCord and Rogers which suggests important cultural values underlining the characters' protracted squabblings, a reading which the text significantly fails to clarify or conclude.

JOHN SLAVIN

Emerald City. Directed by Michael Jenkins. Producer Joan Long. Screenplay David Williamson from his play of the same name. Director of photography Paul Murphy. Editor Neil Thompson. Production designer Owen Williams. Music Chris Neal. Cast John Hargreaves (Colin), Robyn Nevin (Kate), Chris Haywood (Mike McCord), Nicole Kidman (Helen), Ruth Cracknell (Elaine), Dennis Miller (Malcolm). Production company Limelight Pty Ltd. Distributor Greater Union. 35mm. 95 minutes. 1988.

MY GIRLFRIEND'S BOYFRIEND

There is a kind of auteurist criticism, all too familiar, in which the director-as-artist is awarded a god-like position in the scheme of things. In this system the critic studies long and hard to decipher the secret soul feelings and psychological configurations of the chosen being as though this had some absolute significance in itself. Eric Rohmer's position behind his work is so tantalizingly inscrutable, so inviting to the critic as detective, that it's very tempting to mystify his work in this way. There's also a ready made mythology that has built up around this man who changed his name (so it goes) to protect his mother from knowledge of his part in the scandalous business of cinema, a faintly repellent myth, but nonetheless fascinating.

Yet the reflex damnation of all auteurist approaches is no better option. If we avoid the cult of personality there are indeniably generative possibilities in such an approach. In fact, in the case of Rohmer, some kind of auteurism is virtually demanded. Aside from his placement historically within the cultural moment that initially gave rise to auteurism, there is (more importantly) the work itself – stretching over 30 years, coming predominantly in cycles of six, and characterized by a modest, artisan's approach. So if on encountering his latest film, *My Girlfriend's Boyfriend*, there is the impulse to consider it as part of a body of work, it is because of the light the films shed on each other, and the part they play in an amazingly cohesive bigger picture.

Romance is the central obsession of Rohmer's characters in both the cycle of *Moral Tales* beginning in the 1960s and the *Comedies and Proverbs* of the 1980s. At the same time, it is his key dramatic metaphor, taking two distinct forms. When the protagonists' romanticism is imbued with cynicism or failing courage (as is common in the *Moral Tales*) a loss of life is signified. Conversely, the comic earnestness of the young lovers in *My Girlfriend's Boyfriend*, their endless conversations about the intricacies of their personal hopes and desires, and the little humiliations that form part of these daily rituals epitomize their youthful life force (undiminished by the absurdity) of the characters of the *Comedies and Proverbs*. Rohmer is less prescriptive about these things than we might expect and places both cynical and idealistic characters in a variety of positions from film to film ranging from lightly

MY GIRLFRIEND'S BOYFRIEND: 'HUMANITY' IS HERE INTIMATELY TIED TO THE EBBS AND FLOWS OF EVERYDAY LIFE

LEFT: SOPHIE BENOIT (LEA) AND FRANCOIS-ERIC GENDRON (ALEXANDRE).

comic to tragic. Within this system, *My Girlfriend's Boyfriend* is rather like classic romantic comedy. The twists and turns, the deceptions and misunderstandings, the conversational games of Lea and Alexandre and the game played with the matchings and mismatchings of clothes, make the film plainly more entertaining than many of the others.

A variety of relations are also articulated between determining conditions, individual desires and random influences on the lives of Rohmer's characters. In *Summer*, Delphine's friends tell her she is foolish and impractical in her love aspirations, but there is magic at work which transcends all such pragmatics to reward her idealism with breathless perfection. The tragedy of *Full Moon in Paris* is of a girl who similarly attempts to escape an unsatisfying condition only to lose all that was ever of value to her. The particular world of *My Girlfriend's Boyfriend* is a lot less grand in emotional scale, more concerned with 'conformist' responses. The characters are enclosed in their physical surroundings (as in Fabien's tale, often bumping into each other over and over whilst shopping) just as they are enmeshed in their interlocking friendships and romances. Blanche's friends tell her that she and Alexandre don't match, which in this case turns out to be true. The determinations are solid but the protagonists are ultimately able to find ways to exist in their world with neither loss of soul nor total euphoria.

Yet there is a dual tonality underscoring these films – a contrapuntal of the characters' heroic searchings with the absurd pettiness of their utopianisms. Rohmer achieves an astounding balance between these two perspectives, both within each film and from one to the other. So accustomed to searching (in our own heroic way) for a moral 'position', we expect to see some indication of the 'real' standpoint of the films. But they remain serenely inscrutable in this regard, transcending (it seems) the imperative of a fixed moral system to bear witness to the simply human.

'Humanity' is here intimately tied to the ebbs and flows of everyday life. In *My Girlfriend's Boyfriend* this is mostly expressed through a faithfulness to everyday rhythms, very noticeably in patterns of speech but also apparent in the film's other formal systems. The plainness of the sound and image, for example, and the deliberately slow, regular pacing within and between shots are part of an attempt to construct a 'common' drama – a drama of the absurd and extraordinary amidst the ordinary – and a 'realist' aesthetic. Yet these formal strategies seem to indicate more than a simple expressivity. The titles *Moral Tales* and *Comedies and Proverbs* cite us to rather more 'timeless' properties. In this sense, *My Girlfriend's Boyfriend* seems actively engaged in a kind of stylization of the everyday – creating a tangible, material sense of local specifics (geographical, historical and sociological) organically united with a highly abstract form, a system in which, as Andrew Preston has stated, "life and reality have a paradoxical relation to drama and artifice, masking and veiling each other in complex and ultimately inextricable ways" (*Film news*, September 1988).

Thus the film can pay devoted attention to its settings as real places, even lapsing into (what seem like) purely documentary recordings on a couple of occasions, whilst simultaneously making a display of its own artificiality. Every cut is systematically telegraphed with precision and clarity. Whilst the film gestures, for example, to a convention of 'continuity', the invisible flow of that continuity is regularly undermined by shooting and editing strategies in which dialogue exchanges are often disconcertingly presented flat and front on, shot reverse-shot cutting, often peculiarly placing characters in identical positions within the frame, and two shots often following the most basic of stage arrangements, characters simply and unnaturally placed side by side.

Further emphasizing a sense of the tangible and the specific, the direct simplicity of the film's visual system and its technically 'primitive' direct sound create a vivid impression of materiality. There's a sense of textural intricacy and plasticity to be found too in Bresson's *Lancelot Du Lac* or, more recently to Melbourne audiences, Luc Moullet's extraordinary *Comedy of Work*. Moullet's film also shares with *My Girlfriend's Boyfriend* an apparently related sense of the artificiality and contrivances of suburban French environments – a vision of modern alienation expressed in flat planes, smooth surfaces and bold, plain colours and peopled with a young bourgeoisie struggling gallantly to create for themselves some kind of meaningful existence.

Unlike Moullet, however (whose embrace of crude forms and techniques has more a polemical than stylistic function), Rohmer has virtuoso control of his stylistic systems. In *My Girlfriend's Boyfriend*, various symbolisms and metaphors give overt structure (not to mention irony) to related themes and details of the film. See, for example, the giant phallic monument in the midst of Blanche's apartment building (quite literally the centre of her life), the colour coded costumes that provide an hilarious running commentary on unspoken character relations, or the association of Alexandre, the dynamic young executive, with the "Power and Light" building. Whether clearly schematized as in this case, or open and free as was *Summer*, there is above all in his films a striving for formal balance and harmony, an idiosyncratic sense of transcendent order refined over decades of diligent attention.

Perhaps the most suggestive and telling recurring motif in Rohmer's films is water – the beach, the swimming pool, the lake appears as a setting over and over. It's a powerful metaphor because of its ambiguity in Rohmer's system: being variously associated with hope, humiliation, repression or release. One particular meaning is never settled upon – the metaphor remains open, alive, richly resonant. These qualities are typical of Rohmer's work as a whole. The flux of human existence is given form, the flows are contained, yet the potentialities remain. There is little progression from film to film, only movement towards possibilities.

ANNE-MARIE CRAWFORD

(WITH ETERNAL THANKS TO ADRIAN MARTIN)

My Boyfriend's Girlfriend, directed by Eric Rohmer. Producer: Margaret Menegoz. Script: Eric Rohmer. Director of photography: Bernard Lutic. Editor: Maria Luisa Garcia. Music: Jean Louis Valero. Cast: Emmanuelle Chaulet (Blanche), Sophie Renoir (Lea), Eric Veillard (Fabien), Francois Eric Gendron (Alexandre), Anne Laure Meury (Adrienne). Production company: Les Film du Losange. Dist: Newvision. 35mm. 103 mins. France 1987.

TALK RADIO

We've all known for a long time that no film can be a 'window on the world', and most of us would probably admit that nobody down the tracks ever really thought it was. However, once one has given up crude, block notions of 'realism', there are still all sorts of tiny, nagging cultural phenomena that insist – all kinds of hokey or elaborate moments and devices that manage to achieve a fleeting 'reality effect', a brush with the real, an invocation of the world outside the theatre which seems chillingly 'true'. It is as if a magic spell of some kind had suddenly materialized for a moment, a vague, vast and often frightening realm of 'reality' from which fiction is usually comfortably distant. Great minds, from Roland Barthes to Philip Brophy, have dwelt on such seductive, spectacular reality-effects.

Even, or especially, in the midst of the most patently artificial or theatrical concepts (the original *To Be Or Not To Be* by Lubitsch is a good example) such moments of reality can leap out of a film – often on the fine showbiz principle that only that which is *not* seen, only heard, can really carry that special reality-wallop (ie, a myth of film not as a 'window', but as a receiver of transmitted signals). The use of a *radio* can be, in this regard, a film's ace up the sleeve. Think of all those Hollywood fictions that interrupt their imaginary proceedings with a blast of 'history' announced from a nearby radio, carefully faked to sound tinny and ancient: the sinking of the Titanic, the beginning of a world war, or (a brilliant gag in *Radio Days*) the Martian invasion, courtesy of Orson Welles. 'Reality' impinges, even if only for a moment, and then proceeds to drag the rest of the fiction in its thrall.

Talk Radio began life as a theatrical monologue co-written by its star, Eric Bogosian (he's absolutely wonderful), playing a slick and angry talk host named Barry Champlain. On a stage, one can imagine how the piece would derive its own powerful reality effect from the extent of its paradox: a completely artificial, static space, with – as it were – the whole real world on tap, flowing in through a talk-back line. No matter that all the calls are written, performed, contrived: it's more a matter of a showbiz dare, *chutzpah*. Helping out the artifice-reality exchange in this instance is the particularly intense and topical slice of radio talk singled out: the American phenomenon of 'shock radio', in which compere and caller are given free rein to abuse each other violently (I can't wait for Australia to catch up with this trend!). Beyond its so so commentary on this particular media phenomenon, Bogosian's text/performance is a fascinating metaphoric workout of a theme that has been returning recently to the fore of American cinema and culture (*Good Morning Vietnam*, *Punchline*): what Goffman once called the 'presentation of self in everyday life', where the insistent sociality of modern urban existence forces a non-stop public performance on us all.

TALK RADIO: WHAT CAN YOU SAY ABOUT A FILM THAT PRETENDS TO HAVE ITS EAR TO 'REALITY', AND THEN MATERIALIZES - IN ONE SHOCKINGLY EMBARRASSING AND OVER-REACHING SCENE - A CARICATURE OF A YOUNG, DOPED,HEAVY METAL HEAD THAT MAKES MOST TEEN MOVIE STEREOTYPES LOOK MODESTLY TRUE-TO-LIFE BY COMPARISON.

Once in director Oliver Stone's hands, the *Talk Radio* property undergoes a few interesting transformations and the relatively simple fiction-reality gambit of the original gets pulled around and multiply knotted in all sorts of crazy ways. About two thirds of the film stays with Bogosian in a studio, at a microphone, and these sections work very well indeed. Stone gets very 'into' the surface naturalism of this setting: the glass booth, with its multiple reflective surfaces, burning cigarettes in ashtrays, a confused and crowded aural space – and the felt distance between this shut in, heightened fragment of 'reality' and the whole vast zoo of life outside the studio (including Champlain's own private life) – becomes unbearably tense and creepy. Excusing one long and rather awful flashback in the middle section, the film remains true to its own jolly and rigorous sense of 'shock cinema' – with the soundtrack supplying most of the shocks.

But we wonder is Stone really happy about this triumph of *chutzpah*. It was, after all, he who

angled the project towards incorporating the real-life case of Alan Berg – a shock radio host killed by a fanatical band of neo Nazis for his controversial incitements. From one angle, *Talk Radio* (probably the play as much as the film) begs to be taken 'seriously' as a real-life reflection on a Burning Social Issue (the Media and its Effects on Life in the Modern Metropolis) – not as showbiz. And little wonder, coming from a director who, with *Platoon*, perfected a sure fire mixture of bleeding heart state-of-the-nation liberalism, and awesome elegiac Art effect (see R.J. Thompson's commentary on *Platoon* in *Freeze Frame* 1, 1987), a director whose next release is ominously titled *Born on the Fourth of July*. (Of course some of us know, from his scripts for De Palma and Cimino, that Stone once upon a time had a fond understanding of shock, hype, and hustle, but this memory is becoming hard to publicly sustain.) It's in this non-showbiz context that *Talk Radio*'s claims on 'reality' overstep the achievement of an 'effect' and become rather more strident, and over earnest.

Talk Radio is riddled rotten with contradictions. What can you say about a film that pretends to have its ear to 'reality', and then materializes – in one shockingly embarrassing and overreaching scene – a caricature of a young, doped, heavy metal head that makes most teen movie stereotypes look modestly true to life by comparison, that expresses not the state of a nation but only a middle class cinema's rekindled hatred of the 'lower classes' (a hatred reflected also in *Fresh Horses* and *The Accused*)? What can you say about a director whose principal – often only – stylistic mode is hysteria (every flashing light on the console, every tense silence portends death, every key dramatic moment propels the camera or the actor 360 degrees around the room *ad nauseam maximum*), but whose film pretends to decry the effects of the mass media's emotive hype and sensationalism? How do you deal with a film – a big, slick, exciting film – that is ashamed sick to be a spectacle?

Pretending to raise and address a complex of social issues, *Talk Radio*'s political line is merely gothic, apocalyptic. Screwing up all its anger, hysteria and remorse, all the film can say at the last is that we are all burning in Hell together right Here and Now on earth – an easy out for a mode of 'energy realism' not wishing or able to face up to the interest of its own contradictions. For it's one thing for a well intentioned neo-liberal filmmaker to suggest, via a dramatic sleight of hand, that there are a lot of troubled people 'out there' in the real world, and that we should diligently, urgently, try to understand what's troubling them, it's another thing altogether to construct those invisible, teeming masses as (in their dark, pre-socialized hearts) sick, stupid and psychotic — a bunch of uncultured hicks.

Yet what else is that heavy metal head materialised to 'prove', to witness (against all good showbiz sense), and what are all those 'concerned', superior looks from Champlain, his ex wife, his lover, his best friend, mobilized to evoke, but just this? *Talk Radio*, in its passing appropriation of Berg's description of the airwaves as the "last neighbourhood in town", raises the hope of a post modern populism in and for a fragmented, scared, scarred world – but the film hates the 'people' it constructs more profoundly and surely than it annihilates its own hero, its handy liberal Christ of free speech.

ADRIAN MARTIN

Talk Radio directed by Oliver Stone. Producers: Edward R. Pressman, A Kitman Ho. Executive producers: Greg Strangis, Sam Strangis. Script: Eric Bogosian, Oliver Stone, based on the play *Talk Radio* created by Eric Bogosian, Tad Savinar, written by Eric Bogosian, and the book *Talked to Death: The Life and Murder of Alan Berg* by Stephen Singular. Director of photography: Robert Richardson. Editor: David Brenner. Production designer: Bruno Rubeo. Music: Stewart Copeland. Cast: Eric Bogosian (Barry Champlain), Alec Baldwin (Dan), Ellen Greene (Ellen), Leslie Hope (Laura), John C. McGinley (Stu), John Pankow (Chuck Dietz), Michael Wincott (Kent), Zach Grenier (Sid Greenberg). Production company: Edward R. Pressman/Ten Four Productions. Distributor: Greater Union. 35mm. 110 mins. USA. 1988.

LUIGI'S LADIES

There is a heartbeat of humour buried deep inside *Luigi's Ladies*. During a send up of a New Age meeting, people hop and skip like animals around a hall, trying to find themselves. One man in the background is a koala. He's good. He's funny. He's the one laugh in the film.

This alleged comedy, directed and co-written by actor Judy Morris, executive-produced by actor Wendy Hughes (who also co-wrote) is marked by scores of wasted comic opportunities and wasted talents strewn across a story of three women trying to cope with some sort of post-feminist anxiety syndrome. Sara (Wendy Hughes) is a magazine editor, Cee (Sandy Gore) is the dumped wife of an academic, and Jane (Anne Tenney) is the wife of an unfaithful wine merchant. They meet regularly at Luigi's, a restaurant run by the diminutive Luigi (David Rappaport), to discuss life's problems.

LUIGI'S LADIES: IN DEALING WITH MULTIPLE MID-LIFE CRISES, THE FILM HAS AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO MILK HUMOUR (AND DRAMA) FROM YUPPIEDOM, THE NEW AGE RAGE, ETC. BUT NOTHING IS DEVELOPED AROUND THESE NARRATIVE NUCLEI TO MAKE THEM THE LEAST BIT INTERESTING OR FUNNY. ABOVE: WENDY HUGHES CHECKS OUT THE HEADLIGHTS.

In dealing with these multiple mid life crises, the film has ample opportunity to milk humour (and drama) from things like the stock market crash of October 1987, hyperactive children, society restaurants, feminism, glitz journalism, yuppiedom, unwanted pregnancy, infidelity, sexual politics, sex, celibacy, temperamental French chefs, the New Age rage, cosmetic surgery and Sydney. But nothing is developed around these (or a number of other) narrative nuclei to make them the least bit interesting or funny.

The prime examples are the reaction scenes to the stock market crash, which is the structural nub of the narrative. The first part of the film blesses the main characters with the bull run of the Bourse. Then it crashes: but do we get a well-crafted, skilfully choreographed sequence as the characters respond and reorient their lives? No. Instead, we get minutes and minutes of clumsy comedy handled with all the grace of a tyre commercial.

This appears to be the result of a directorial flatness which does the whole film. And many scenes of sharp emotion that would lend themselves so well to comedy or drama (or both) are diffused by poor performances, a grand lack of good credible dialogue, and some almost criminally dull photography.

Special mention must be made of the low standard of performance from what is an obviously talented and distinguished cast.

Crucial to any effective comedy film is the need of a performance to nail an emotion or a dramatic tone soundly on the head, and this must fit consistently (more or less) within an appropriate narrative context. This can be done with subtlety, as with the works of Woody Allen or the vastly underrated Albert Brooks, or with a sledgehammer, as with the best of Mel Brooks or the Zucker/Abrahams/Zucker team who made *Flying High* and *The Naked Gun*.

Ivan Reitman's *Twins*, Martin Brest's *Midnight Run*, Frank Oz's *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* and Charles Crichton's *A Fish Called Wanda* serve as four recent examples where dramatic and comic elements are skilfully fused and where comic performances make the film.

With *Luigi's Ladies* what we basically have is an aimless mess: the performances are overplayed and underplayed at all the wrong moments, monologues fall flat and attempts at a bit of good old shtuck (like being drunk, overwhelmed, saddened or angry) are torpedoed by lame and unconvincing acting.

In a word, what the film basically lacks is scope. There's not enough substance either in the material or in the performances for a failed TV sitcom pilot, let alone a full-length cinema feature.

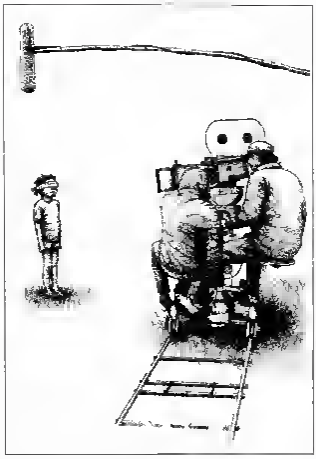
So what went wrong? Perhaps the press notes give some insight into the dubious origins of the project: "*Luigi's Ladies* grew out of lunches that [Judy] Morris, [Wendy] Hughes, [Jennifer] Claire (a co-writer), and [Sandy] Gore had been holding for years, though usually round the kitchen table at each other's houses, not at exclusive restaurants. 'We'd start with French champagne, and by the time we finished we were down to white wine and beer!' explains Hughes. 'We talked about politics, men, sex, facelifts, basically the fabric of life.'"

Maybe Ms Hughes, Ms Morris and friends should have considered how their view of "the fabric of life" was going to strike a stone-cold sober cinema patron who is $8.50 down on the deal.

But in all fairness, Judy Morris and Wendy Hughes deserve a toast to the future. They are two extremely talented actors who have proved themselves in front of the camera many times over. Here's to their next film collaboration. It *will* be better. It has to be.

JIM SCHEMBRI

Luigi's Ladies. Directed by Judy Morris. Producer: Patric Juillet. Executive producer: Wendy Hughes. Associate producer: Rachel Symes. Script: Jennifer Claire, Judy Morris, Wendy Hughes, Ranald Allen. Director of photography: Steve Mason. Editor: Pamela Barnetta. Production designer: Melody Cooper. Composer: Sharon Calcraft. Cast: Wendy Hughes (Sara), Sandy Gore (Cee), Anne Tenney (Jane), David Rappaport (Luigi), John Walton (Steve), Ray Meagher (Lance), Serge Lazareff (Trev), Joe Spano (Nick), Max Cullen (Chef). Production company: Tra La La Films. Distributor: Hoyts. 35 mm. Australia. 1989.



DON'T SHOOT THE BEST BOY!
John Shand and Tony Wellington
(Currency Press, 1988, 194 pp, rrp $17.95

JUST WHEN WE THOUGHT it might have been a wrap for books on the post-1970 Australian feature film industry, up pops yet another one from those champions of the local film scene, Currency Press. Subtitled 'The Film Crew at at Work', *Don't Shoot the Best Boy!* endeavours "to provide some insight into how [Australian feature films and some television dramas] are made, and what kind of people make them". This, to my knowledge, is the first major publication to explore in detail local filmmaking practices – perhaps Sue Mathews' *35mm Dreams* is its nearest companion – and it should prove a useful reference tool for film students in particular.

To make sense of what Bob Ellis refers to as "that Parkinsonian agglutination of multiple hubris that makes our local film industry the fratricidal vortex it mostly is", Shand and Wellington have selected and arranged their material with some precision. The book is divided into 11 chapters, each focusing on a specific film crew position and based on the testimonies of two or three leading exponents of their craft. From the 27 interviews conducted, the roles of 13 principal positions are highlighted in such a way that the work of other crew members is thrown into relief as well. Now, the authors assure us, "the reader can find out what a best boy actually does, and what a clapper board is used for".

The chapter order more or less corresponds to the sequence of events associated with feature production: from the screenwriter through to the sound editor and mixer, with the final word allocated to the director. Even then, the director's role is dealt with rather obliquely, with emphasis on his or her relations with the heads of departments who form the subjects of the preceding 10 chapters. This approach is not designed to down play the godlike status of the director, but rather to stress the collaborative nature of the medium. By the time we reach chapter 11, however, this message has been repeated ad nauseam. The authors' fascination with this phenomenon is evident in their selection of quotes from different interviews, but perhaps best encapsulated in cinematographer Peter James' statement:

> The wonderful thing about a film crew is that you can have so many diverse people. Yet they can all come together and be one family, live in one another's pockets for months on end, and all get along famously. I think it's incredible. (p.2)

Another major emphasis in *Don't Shoot the Best Boy!* is that of production value – maximizing the on-screen value of often limited production budgets or, as first assistant director Mark Turnbull bluntly puts it, getting "the best quality on the screen for the least amount of money". This preoccupation has characterized the local industry, more or less, for the past 20 years, and it comes as little surprise to find numerous references in this book to Australian film technicians' resourcefulness, ingenuity, professionalism, versatility, democratic practices, etc, etc. But if we accept these glowing tributes to what have come to be seen as distinctive Australian methods of operation, we must ask ourselves – as Gillian Leahy has also noted (*Filmnews*, December 1988) – why it is that such good crews not infrequently turn out such poor films.

There are few clues on this subject in the text. Editor Nick Beauman speaks of his lack of empathy for *The Earthling* and the problems he encountered with director Peter Collinson, he suggests he wouldn't again take on a film without believing in the project. But *The Earthling*, of course, was not a 'true' Australian film – and most filmmakers, as I understand, often have to take jobs according to availability, rather than preference. This example apart, there is little reference to discord on the set(s), or industrial strife of the kind that makes headlines in the trade papers (*Evil Angels*, *The Right Hand Man*, *Joe Wilson's Mates*, et al).

Perhaps the most carping comment in the book is that of David Williamson:

> It never ceases to amaze me that thematic parallels are drawn through a director's body of work that obviously are not there. The film theorists are desperate to find constant thematic concerns in the work of directors who often used scripts by wildly different writers in wildly different areas. Certainly, it must be true that directors are attracted to a certain type of theme when they're reading scripts to see which one they'll do, but beyond that, a lot of film theorizing is spurious. (p.5)

This ostensibly records his dismay at the overall lack of recognition of the screenwriter's contribution. While it would be too much to suggest that the book as a whole is anti-theory, there is no attempt made by the authors to move beyond the anecdotal level. Not do we have any way of knowing whether slightly more scurrilous interview material was deleted in the interests of pushing the determinedly 'happy families' line. Maybe film crews *are* all happy little Vegemites on the set. I recall, for example, art director David Copping's glowing comments about the team spirit and special nature of the *Picnic at Hanging Rock* production experience. As a consequence of this approach, however, the book could be said to lack a little fire.

Interviewee statements are included at face value and no attempt to record alternative viewpoints has been made. It would have been interesting, say, to have sought Henri Safran's response to Matt Carroll's claim that the visual concept for *Storm Boy* was his, that Safran was merely a "hired gun". Similarly Bob Ellis (in an *Australian* review) disputes producer Jane Scott's self-credit for casting Ray Barrett as lead actor in *Goodbye Paradise*. According to Ellis, "every film tends to become a *Rashomon* of 22 diseased memories, each touting a different revised standard version and avoiding each other on award nights". If *Don't Shoot the Best Boy!* bypasses the theoretical touch, then, it also spurns the gossipy.

This is not to suggest that the anecdotal approach fails to provide enjoyment or enlightenment. The candour of many of the interviewees is refreshing, and overdue credit is given to the work of key crew members who seldom appear in the spotlight. In particular, the importance of the continuity person, sound recordist, boom operator, first assistant director, sound editor and sound mixer in the production process is highlighted, and the differing roles of the director of photography and camera operator, and art director and production designer are clarified. The links between the various departments (or at least between heads of departments) are also made clearer, to the point where functional overlap would appear to the non-practitioner to be almost a problem. Not so, say the authors: merely another indication of "the enthusiasm with which most Australian crew members approach their craft".

Other crew positions not dealt with in the main body of the text are outlined in an appendix, and the book also includes a glossary of technical terms, an index and very brief biographies of the 27 interviewees. This is quite an array of information but, as always, one hankers for more. It would have been nice, for example, if the biographical section had been extended beyond birthdate, birthplace and incomplete film credits to include more details of the career paths of these people: how does one become a third assistant director, production secretary or whatever, and – having attained that post – how then does one avoid being pigeon-holed and move up the rungs towards the glittering prizes? Given the number of films mentioned, a reasonable filmography – admittedly a pet obsession of mine – would also have been helpful.

And at the end of it all, except for those (like Tony Wellington) already in the know, how much more familiar is the reader with the operations of the film crew? In many ways, the book's anecdotal approach and role selectivity work against presenting a composite view of a crew in action. How many people are on a set at any given time? When do they break for lunch? What filling do they have in their bagels? The authors have, for defensible reasons, chosen to exclude actors from their study, but perhaps what was needed was a little of the common touch – perceptions of the production process through the perspective of the film extra, for example, so wryly observed in the 1975 Granada telemovie *Ready When You Are Mr McGill*. Alternatively, a comprehensive case study approach to a particular local film – extending the old *Cinema Papers* production report format – might tell us more about day-to-day filmmaking procedures as well as the theories underpinning them. Or maybe commissioning a new tome based on the *Confessions of a Sound Editor* (Peter Fenton would be the obvious choice) is the next step to take.

Oh, and what does a best boy do? One has to go all the way to the Crew Role Appendix to learn that this person is the "second in command to the

Gaffer. A person experienced in film lighting who sets and adjusts lights under instruction from the Gaffer". (p. 164)

But what is a Gaffer? This hunt-and-peck method is akin to looking up a naughty word in a large dictionary, only to find a "See" reference to a not-so-naughty word. (The Gaffer definition, to be fair, is in the Appendix as well.)

KEN BERRYMAN

BOOKS RECEIVED

BRANDO: A BIOGRAPHY IN PHOTOGRAPHS
Christopher Nickens
(Columbus, 1988, 141 pp rrp $23 95)
A short Brando biography, illustrated with a selection of snapshots, portraits and publicity stills

●

THE COMPLETE FILM DICTIONARY
Ira Konigsberg
(Bloomsbury, 1988, 420 pp rrp $49 95)
The one stop shopping dictionary, from A and B printing to Zoptic system 3,500 entries that cover technical, historical, production and critical terminology If you want a brief definition, description or account of the Steadicam, the auteur theory, the Struss lens, ADR, the travelling matte, luminous flux and the Hays Office, it's all here

●

MOVIE TALK : WHO SAID WHAT ABOUT WHOM IN THE MOVIES
David Shipman
Bloomsbury, 1988, 244 pp rrp $39 95)
Four thousand plus paragraphs quotes, one liners, gags or review extracts covering actors, directors, writers and filmmakers A gossipy lucky-dip

PHOTO: MAKE UP SESSION, *RETURN OF THE LIVING DEAD PART 2*, FROM DAVID STRICK *OUR HOLLYWOOD*.

COLUMBUS FILMMAKERS SERIES

ALFRED HITCHCOCK
Gene D Phillips
Columbus, 1984, 160 pp rrp $19 95
A brief study of Hitchcock's life and work which attempts, among other things, to give more focus to the director's British films. Preface by Andrew Sarris

●

CHAPLIN
Julian Smith
Columbus, 1984, 160 pp rrp $19 95
An account of Chaplin's career which concentrates on *The Great Dictator*, *Monsieur Verdoux* and *Limelight*, rather than the earlier shorts, and which traces the influence of the music hall on his work

NEW GERMAN CINEMA: FROM OBERHAUSEN TO HAMBURG
James Franklin
Columbus, 1983, 160 pp rrp $19 95
A look at German cinema after the Oberhausen manifesto, with chapters on Kluge, Straub-Huillet, Schlondorff, Fassbinder, Wenders and Syberberg

●

FILMS OF SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY
Baird Searles
Abrams, 1988, 240 pp rrp $72
Well illustrated in colour and black and white, this account of science fiction and fantasy films covers a wide range *Mary Poppins* to *The Terminator*, *Teenage Caveman* to *Carousel*, *Paris Qui Dort* to *Twilight Zone the Movie*

●

OUR HOLLYWOOD
David Strick
Arrow Books, 1988, 101 pp rrp $27 95
A collection of black-and white photographs by David Strick, who takes a wry insider's look at Hollywood. fight scene rehearsals barroom scuffles, auditions for panties commercials, make up sessions on *Return of the Living Dead II* and fashion shows at the Polo Lounge, to give what Bret Easton Ellis in his introduction calls the closest thing to a visual representation of *The Day of the Locust* that any photographer has come up with

●

FEATURES PRE PRODUCTION

ALMOST ALIEN

Production company Entertainment Partners
Producer James Michael Vernon
Director Rolf de Heer
Scriptwriter Peter Lefgren
Assoc. producer Penny Wall
Photography Martin McGrath
1st asst director Dan Cranberry
Editor Pippa Anderson
Casting Forcast
Publicity Lionel Midford

Synopsis: A TV weather forecaster goes through a mid life crisis when he discovers after 18 years of marriage and two children, that his wife is an alien

THE BACK STREET GENERAL

Prod company Avalon Film Corporation
Dist company Overseas Film Group/PRO
Producer Philip Avalon
Scriptwriter Denis Whitburn
Based on the play by Philip Avalon
Editor Ted Otton
Exec. producers Eric Jury
Assoc producer Michael Boon
Unit manager Stephen McGagnan
Location manager Stephen McGagnan
Prod. secretary Susan Pickup
Prod. accountant Michael Boon
Casting Faith Martin & Associates
Still photography Tony Nolan
Bob King
Studios Avalon Film Corporation Studios
Budget $4 million
Length 90 minutes
Gauge 35mm

Synopsis: An Australian country boy is captured by the Viet Cong and held prisoner for years after the end of the Vietnam War. He eventually escapes both from the Viet Cong and the Australian Army... who wish to debrief him and get information about other MIAs. He makes his way home to find many changes have taken place

BEYOND MY BEACH

Executive producer Peter Boyle
Producer Frank Howson
Writer Frank Howson
Assoc. producer Barbi Taylor
Publicity Lionel Midford

BREAKAWAY (working title)

Prod. company Breakaway Films Pty Ltd
Dist company Atlantic Releasing SV
Producers Don McLennan
Jane Ballantyne
Director Don McLennan
Scriptwriter Jan Sardi
Photography Zbigniew Friedrich
Casting Greg Apps

Synopsis: When Joey (a prisoner on the run) takes Reginald (an accountant) as his hostage, he gets more than he bargained for

THE PHANTOM MOVIE

Prod company Phantom Films Pty Ltd
Producer Peter Sequoia
Scriptwriter Ken Shadie
Based on the comic strip by Lee Falk
Prod designer Grace Walker
Exec producer Bruce Sherlock
Assoc producer Mark Turnbull

THE STARS ARE UPSIDE DOWN

Prod. company Soundstage Australia Limited
Producer Tibor Meszaros
Director Mario Andreacchio
Scriptwriter Joy Whitby
Based on the novel by Gabriel Alington
Exec producer Hanesh Downie
Assoc producer Joy Whitby
Studios Soundstage Australia Limited
Tracks
Grasshopper Productions
Laboratory Movielab
Budget $1.4 million
Length 93 mins
Gauge 16mm

Synopsis: The story of Tavy a 16-year-old English servant girl, who finds love and a challenging new life in mid 19th century Australia.

YOUNG FLYNN

Executive producer Peter Boyle
Producer Frank Howson
Scriptwriters Frank Howson
Associate producer Alister Webb
Publicity Barbi Taylor
Lionel Midford

PRODUCTION

CINDERELLA'S SECRET

Prod. company Yoram Gross Film Studio
Producer Yoram Gross
Animation director Ray Nowland
Scriptwriter Leonard Lee
Assoc. producer Sandra Gross
Music Guy Gross
Length 80 minutes
Gauge 35 mm

Cast: Robyn Moore Keith Scott

Synopsis. An enchanting story which borrows characters and events from popular fairy tales and weaves them into one charming and suspenseful tale of love, mystery and mirth

HUNTING

Prod company Boulevard Films
Producer Frank Howson
Director Frank Howson
Scriptwriter Frank Howson
Photography David Connell
Sound recordist John Rowley
Prod. designer John Dowding
Exec. producer Peter Boyle
Line producer Barbi Taylor
Prod executive Lynn Howson
Prod manager Lesley Parker
Prod coordinator Deborah Samuels
Financial controller Belinda Williams
Accounts assistant Christine Hodgson
Asst to exec producer Anne Cashin
Receptionist Annette Nevill
Location manager John Suhr
Unit manager Hamish Alderson Hicks
1st asst director John Powditch
2nd asst director Brett Popplewell
3rd asst director Rob Visser
Prod/unit runner Lisa Hohenfels
Focus puller Greg Ryan
Gaffer Rob Young
Best boy Peter Molonoy
Genie operator Roy Pachett
Grip Ian Benallick
Grip s assistant Arthur Manousakis
Costume designer/ standby wardrobe Aphrodite Dowding
Wardrobe coordinator Margot Lindsay
Make up Amanda Rowbottom
Hair Pam Murphy
Art director Benedicte Wynack
Props buyers Keith Hanscombe
Danielle Cooney
Set dresser Victoria Rowell

LINDA SAFARI

Prod company Soundstage Australia Limited
Dist. company UAA
Producer Tibor Meszaros
Animation director Laszlo Ujvari
Scriptwriters Joan Ambrose
Tibor Meszaros
Peter Jeffrey
Script editor Joan Ambrose
Based the novel by Caper/Gat & Rozgonyi
Photography Sandor Polyak
Sound recordist Ric Curtin
Editor Geza Paal
Prod designer Sandor Polyak
Composers K. Peek
R. Szakora
C.S Bogdan
G Berkes
M Fenyo
A. Bodnar
G Szentmihalyi
Assoc. producer Robert A. Cocks
Exec. producer Hannah Downie
Prod supervisor David Downie
Prod managers Endre Sik
Janos Juhasz
Prod secretary Alle Conley
Prod accountants Robert Sharpe
Sandor Antalfai
1st asst director Miklost Katalin
Casting Watermelon Valley Productions
Storyboard Janos Katona
Character designer Janos Katona
Music performed by Kevin Peek
Sound editors Ric Curtin
S. Kalman
Mixers Ric Curtin
S Kalman
Animation Hello Lassie Film Studio
Opticals Hungarian Film Laboratory
Studios Soundstage Australia Limited
Hello Lassie Film Studio
Hungarian
Tracks
Laboratory Hungarian Film Laboratory
Length 90 mins
Gauge 35mm
Shooting stock Eastmancolor

Synopsis A story of intrigue, adventure, mystery, comedy and romance, combining humour and heroism with rock n'roll music for all ages. The heroine is Linda a police officer with Interpol. She is well known for her Tae Kwon Do and her linguistic skills. Several stories operate simultaneously and the protagonist always wins against great odds, without guns, in her fight against organized international crime and terrorism

FEATURES POST PRODUCTION

CONFIDENCE

Prod. company Confidence Productions Pty Ltd
Dist company New Visions Pictures
Producer Ben Gannon
Director Michael Jenkins
Scriptwriter Tony Morphett
Based on the original idea by Bryan Brown
Tony Morphett
Photography Russell Boyd
Sound recordist Gary Wilkins
Editor Neil Thompson
Prod. designer John Stoddart
Prod. coordinator Caroline Rothauer
Prod manager Adrienne Read
Unit managers Mason Curtis (Beachport)
William Matthews (Sydney)
Location manager Philip Boone
Prod. secretary Chrissina van der Heyden
Prod accountant Jill Coverdale
1st asst director Chris Webb
2nd asst director Henry Osborne
3rd asst director Virginia Allan
Continuity Jo Weeks
Casting Liz Mullinar Casting Consultants
Extras casting Judith Cruden
Lighting cameraperson Russell Boyd
Camera operator David Williamson
Focus puller John Platt
Clapper/loader Richard Bradshaw
Key grip Ray Brown
Asst grips Ian Bird
Warren Greiff
Aaron Walker
Gaffer Brian Bangrove
Electrician Paul Gantner
Boom operator Mark Waterzak
Art director John Wingrove
Art dept coordinator Frances McDonald
Costume designer Terry Ryan
Make up Lesley Reaveay
Hairdresser Adele Wilcox
Wardrobe Anthony Jones
Wardrobe asst Fiona Nicolls
Props Sandy Wingrove
Props buyer Jock McLachlan
Standby props Colin Gibson
Special effects Brian Pearce
Choreography Ross Coleman
Art dept runner Andrew Short
Scenic artists Michael O Kane
Bill Undery
Construction manager Alan Fleming
Foreman Bob Paton
Carpenters Robert Podlujsky
Rory Farrell
Steve Hinrable
Matt Ward
Alan Armytage
Carpenter/joiner David Scott
Set construction Larry Sandy
1st asst editor Susan Metcalf
2nd asst editor David Grusovin
Stunts coordinator Glen Boswell
Still photography Joe Townley
Best boy Colin Chase
Runner Ross Bell
Publicity Pare Mooyer Publicity Pty Ltd
Unit publicist David Brown
Catering John Faithfull
Studios Raleigh Park Studios
Laboratory Colorfilm
Lab liaison Denise Wolfson
Cast: Ryan Brown (Harry), Karen Allen (Julie), Justin Resnick (David) Bill Kerr (Cec), Chris Haywood (Rostock), Bruce Spence (Foster) Bruce Myles (Scraper) Ben Franklin (Larsen), Paul Chubb (Billy) Peter Hehir (Giles)

Synopsis Con man Harry Reynolds arrives in Beachport with a plan to relieve the townspeople of their money but finally discovers that his affection for the community becomes greater than his greed.

DEPTH OF FEELING

Prod. company Philip Emanuel Productions Limited
Producer David C.J. Douglas
Director Arch Nicholson
Scriptwriters Henry Tefay
Ken Young
Photography Dan Burstall
Sound recordist Tim Lloyd
Editor Rose Evans
Prod designer Larry Eastwood
Composer Peter Kaldor
Exec. producer Philip Emanuel
Assoc producer David Douglas
Prod supervisor Sally Ayre-Smith
Prdo coordinator Liz Hagan
Prod. accountant Reel Accountants – Michele D Arcey
1st asst director Rob Donaldson
2nd asst director Debbie Atkins
Asst art director Christian Robinson
Continuity Linda Ray
Casting Alison Barrett
Lighting cameraperson Dan Burstall
Focus puller Cameron McFarlane
Clapper/loader Miriana Marusic
Key grip Paul Thompson
Asst grip Damien Merryman
Gaffer Matt Shurrey
Boom operator Mark Van Kool
Asst art director Mark Ayre-Smith
Make up Bess Kingsbury
Hairdresser Bess Kingsbury
Wardrobe supervisor Michele Leonard
Wardrobe asst Natasha Herbert
Props buyer John Osmond
Standby props John Osmond
Asst editor Simon Smithers
Neg matching Negative Thinking
Stunts coordinator Chris Anderson
Still photography Bliss Swift
Best boy Lancelot Cochead
Publicity Anne Wright
Publicity coordinator Gretchen Cook
Catering Johnny Faithfull
Laboratory Colorfilm
Length 90 mins
Gauge 35mm
Shooting stock 5297

Cast: Colin Friels (Richard), Catherine McClements (Kate) Jerome Ehlers (Jim Thorne), Helen Mutkins (Carla) Kate Sheil (Phoebe)

Synopsis Kate arranges an intimate weekend to patch up her marriage with Richard an ambitious public relations executive But her plans are sabotaged when Richard arrives with rock superstar Jim Thorne in tow While Richard is trying to keep his scheming mistress Carla on hold and the temperamental rock star entertained, Kate, lonely and vulnerable, finds herself irresistibly attracted to the sexy Jim Thorne

DOT IN SPACE

Prod company Yoram Gross Film Studio Pty Ltd.
Producer Yoram Gross
Director Yoram Gross
Scriptwriter John Palmer
Associate producer Sandra Gross
Assc cinat director Athol Henry
Music Guy Gross
Prod supervisor Jeanette Toms
Prod manager Jacki Goodridge
Asst editor Stephen Hayes
Length 80 minutes
Gauge 35mm

Cast. Robyn Moore, Keith Scott.

Synopsis: Dot finds her way into an American spacership which lands her on a war torn planet of Rounds and Squares

GLASS

Prod company Oilrag Productions Pty Ltd
Producers Patrick Fitzgerald
Chris Kennedy
Director Chris Kennedy
Scriptwriter Chris Kennedy

Based on the original idea by Chris Kennady
Photography Pieter de Vries
Sound recordist David Glasser
Editor James Bradley
Composer Mario Gregorio
Prod. manager Cathy Flannery
Script editors Peter Butt
Jo Hansbury
Location managers Patrick Fitzgerald
Chris Kennedy
Prod. accountant Gordon Davis
1st asst director Corrie Soeterboek
2nd asst director Elizabeth Lovell
3rd asst director Rob Bell
Continuity N'aki Moores
Casting Chris Kennedy
Focus puller Andrew Barbara
Clapper/loader Lisa Lloyd
Key grip Toby Copping
Asst grip Andrew Worssam
Gaffer Peter Gailey
Boom operator Janny Stutcliffe
Art director Kerry Ainsworth
Asst art director Lisa Elvy
Make up Sandy Opsomer
Jenny Geoffrey
Hairdresser Sandy Opsomer
Asst editor Jane Moran
Neg. matching Negthink
Music performed by Mario Gregorio
Sound editor Helen Brown
Mixer Alasdair MacFarlane
Stunts Peter West
Still photography Brian Mahoney
Runner Peter Pecora
Publicity Write On Group
Catering Shooting Party
Gerry Billings
Mixed at Palm Studios
Laboratory Colorfilm
Lab liaison Simon Wicks
Length 90 mins
Gauge 16mm
Shooting stock Kodak 7291/92/97
Cast: Alan Lovell (Richard Vickery) Lisa Peers (Julia Vickery), Adam Stone (Peter Breen) Natalie McCurry (Alison Baume) Julie Herbert (Brenda Fairfax) Bernard Clarby (Inspector Anderson) Richard Gilbert (Reg) Marilyn Thomas (Alice) Felicity Copeland (Veronica), Rowan Jackson (Charlie)
Synopsis: A contemporary romantic thriller of distortions and reflections flowers and the illusions created by grease paint. It is a haunting stylised tale of escape

MACK THE KNIFE

Prod. company Media World Pty Ltd
Producers John Tatoulis
Colin Sanch
Directors John Tatoulis
Colin Sanch
Scriptwriter Deborah Parsons
Based on the original idea by John Tatoulis
Colin Sanch
Photography Peter Zakharov
Sound recordist John Wilkinson
Editor (video) Michael Collins
Prod. designer Phil Chambers
Assoc. producers Deborah Parsons
Peter Ben Hogg
Prod. manager Yvonne Collins
Unit manager Sonya Pemberton
Location manager Tania Patermoster
1st asst director Stephen Saks
2nd asst director Sonya Pemberton
Continuity Victoria Sullivan
Lighting director Mark Gilfedder
Camera operator Peter Zakharov
Focus puller Walter Repich
Clapper/loader Walter Repich
Camera assistant Brian Rogerson
Key grip Peter Kershaw
Asst grip Michael Madigan
3rd electrics Stephen Price
Boom operator Greg Nelson
Make up and special make up effects Vivienne MacGillicuddy
Wardrobe Lilly Cherny
Props buyer Hamish Alderson Hicks
Standby props Fiona Greville
Special effects Brian Pearce
Peter Armstrong
Musical director Jax Sarafskii
Music prod. coordinator David Williams
Stunts coordinator Chris Peters
Still photography Martin Saunders
Best boy Chris Rodmann
Runner Andrew Power
Catering Sweet Seduction
Laboratory VFL
Lab liaison Bruce Braun
Length 100 mins
Gauge 35mm
Shooting stock Kodak 5297
Cast: Hugo Race (Mack Dunelly) Sasthe Press (Wendy Lyla) Rebekah Elmaloglou (Jo-Jo Lyle), John Flaus (Senior Detective Miles Kostic), Dominic Sweeney (Detective Danny Collins), Craig Alexander (Ivan Friedrich), Ian Rae (Pike) Richard Aspel (Barnitzi) Tassos Ioannides (Malla)
Synopsis: Lust, voyeurism greed and innocence Wendy the punk jazz singer Jo her adoring 15 year old sister Mack the rock musician and punk activitist with the cops and the mob on his back. Sweltering weather, stinking corruption sultry jazz classics Sisters, innocently trapped in a world running out of control

RETUGN NOMB

Prod. company Musical Films Pty Ltd
Producer Cristina Pozzan
Director Ray Argall
Scriptwriter Ray Argall
Based on the original idea by Ray Argall
Photography Mandy Walker
Sound recordist Bronwyn Murphy
Editor Ken Sullivan
Assoc. producer Daniel Scharf
Prod. manager Elisa Argenzio
Prod. assistant Deborah Annear
Prod. accountant Monika Gehrt
1st asst director Euan Keddie
2nd asst director Paula Smith
Casting consultant Greg Apps
Camera assistant Jo Erskine
Gaffer Andre Behrsin
Boom operator Jack Healy
Art director Kerrith Holmes
Wardrobe Lucinda Cinnterbuck
Still photography J Van Loendardoor
Mechanic Charlie Kirroff
Runners Sarah Marshall
Bruno Scocazzi
Mixed at Soundfirm
Laboratory Cinevex
Lab liaison Ian Anderson
Budget $347,000
Length 80 mins
Gauge 16mm
Shooting stock Fuji
Cast: Frank Holden (Steve), Dennis Coard (Noel), Mickie Camilleri (Judy) Ben Mendelsohn (Gary)
Synopsis The story of two brothers, Noel and Steve After a close childhood, they gradually drifted apart and now live in different cities The film is an observation of the different environments that have shaped their lives and the shared values which now 10 years later draw them back together

SCORPIO

Prod. company Rosa Coloanne Pty Ltd
Dist. company Octopus Worldwide
Media Enterprises
Producers Rosa Coloanne
Reg McLean
Director Eugene Schlusser
Scriptwriter Patricia Edgworth
Based on the idea by Reg McLean
Photography Nicholas Sherman
Sound recordist Michael Piper
Editor Zbigniew Friedrich
Exec. producer Rosa Coloanne
Prod. manager Alison Sadler
Unit manager Julia Wurm
Location manager Ian Bidgood
Prod. accountant Reg McLean
1st asst director Archie D Aptano
Continuity Heather Earnham
Lighting cameraperson Nicholas Sharman
Focus puller Michael Kelly
Key grip Freddie Dierck
Asst grip Daniel Schlusser
Gaffer Tom Moody
Boom operator Scott Piper
Art director Lisa Brennan
Make up Ann Marie Hurley
Wardrobe Anna Iravanni
Special effects John Armstrong
Jay Western
Asst editor Annette Kelly
Stunts coordinator Zev Eleftheriou
Still photography Tom Moody
Best boy Andrew Robertson
Runner Joanne Lee
Publicity Silvana Scibilia
Julia Fraser
Catering Peter Smith Kookaburra Catering
Mixed at Hendon Studios
Laboratory Cinevex
Length 90 mins
Gauge 16mm
Shooting stock Eastman Kodak
Cast: Diana Craig (Diane Lane), Garry Day (Barry Robins) Lynne Williams (Louise Parker) Edwin Hodgeman (Monroe) Don Barker (PM) John Noble (PM's minder) Terry Mack (Michael Meadows) Bob Newman (Permanent secretary), Gordon Goulding (William Sinclair), Patrick Edgeworth (Editor)
Synopsis: Newly elected Government MP Diane Lane is determined to become Australia's first woman Prime Minister Her best friend and confidante Louise Parker a political reporter wants to become editor of her paper Unaware of Diane's plans her married lover Barry Robbins the Minister of health has similar ambitions and plots the demise of the current Prime Minister

DOCUMENTARIES

CAJUN GUMBO

Prod. company Ordinary Miracle Pictures
Producers Brenton Harris
Bruce Ready
Director Brenton Harris
Scriptwriter Mike Sexton
Photography Bruce Ready
Prod. assistants Chris Jones
Jenny Howse
Editor Patrick Emmett
Mixer Eddie Vorneer
Prod. accountant Robin Holmes
Narrator John Stanton
Laboratory Dn Art (New York)
Length 50 mins
Gauge 16mm
Shooting stock Eastmancolor
Synopsis: A discoveryh of the Cajun people from South West Louisiana and their unique French based life style

DOWN FROM DARWIN

Prod. company Ordinary Miracle Pictures
Producers Bruce Ready
Brenton Harris
Director Tony Le Maistre
Scriptwriter Mike Sexton
Photography Bruce Ready
Prod. manager Brenton Harris
Length 50 mins
Gauge 16mm to 35 video
Synopsis: A look at the top end of Australia and remnants that remain after World War II

FOOD FIGHT ERODING THE T'BOLI

Prod. company Hand Held Films
Producer Fiona Douglas
Director Ivo Burum
Executive producers Ivo Burum
Photography Edmund Millis
Editor Ivo Burum
Sound recordist Ivo Burum
Synopsis: The ancient ways of the tribal T'boli people of the Philippines are threatened by large-scale development These documentaries explore the people's way of life and the way they are adapting to change.

THE GREAT TAXI ADVENTUGE

Prod. company Michael Dillon Film Enterprises
Producer Michael Dillon
Director Michael Dillon
Scriptwriter Michael Dillon
Photography Michael Dillon
Sound recordist John Morgan
Editor Rod Hibberd
Exec. producers Edward Kelly
John Morgan
Prod. manager Edward Kelly
Prod. secretary Sue Carter
Neg. matching Kit the Kaper
Mixer Alasdair Macfarlane
Mixed at Palm Studios
Laboratory Video Film Company
Length 54 mins
Gauge 16mm
Shooting stock 7291, 7292
Synopsis: A lively lighthearted account of the world's longest and most exciting, most expensive, most taxing taxi ride ever From Buckingham Palace to the Sydney Opera House with the meter running the whole way

HANDMAIDENS AND BATTLEAXES

Prod. company Silver Films
Producer Rosalind Gillespie
Director Rosalind Gillespie
Scriptwriter Rosalind Gillespie
Photography Laurie Malinnes
Sound recordist Bronwyn Murphy
Editor Diana Priest
Prod. designers Edia Kurzer
Dianne Reynolds
Composer Felicity Foxx
Prod. manager Adrienne Purr
Prod. assistant Joanna Frew
1st asst director Elizabeth Sunn
Camera assistant Felicity Surtees
Gaffer Jamie Egan
Make-up Angela Sodini
Title designer Leigh Whinnett
Budget $198,000
Length 52 mins
Gauge 16mm
Shooting stock Kodak
Synopsis: A film about how nursing developed as an altruistic occupation for women which in today's terms, is no longer sufficient motivation for such a highly skilled and demanding profession This has led to a crisis in the profession worldwide.

HANS NEYSEN – THE UNKNOWN PAINTINGS

Prod. company Terrace Publications
Producer Reg McLean
Director Eugene Schlusser
Scriptwriter Eugene Schlusser
Photography Nicholas Sherman
Sound recordist Michael Piper
Editor Eugene Schlusser
Assoc. producers Tony Cohen

	Georgina Andrew
Prod supervisor	Reg McLean
Prod coordinator	Alison Sadler
Camera assistant	Michael Kelly
Stil photography	Nicholas Sherman
Laboratory	Cineveo
Lab liaison	Ian Anderson
Length	30 mins
Gauge	16mm
Shooting stock	Eastman Kodak

Synopsis "The sun and the warmth is my relig ion." This much loved and prolific Australian painter have away many of his works to friends and relatives around Hahndorf The film will give the background to the works through their eyes, accompanied by footage of the landscapes in which he painted for most of his life.

INTO THE MAINSTREAM

Prod company	Dana Productions Pty Ltd
Dist. company	Kim Lewis Marketing
Producer	Ned Lander
Directors	John Whiteman Ned lander
Scriptwriters	John Whiteman Ned Lander
Photography	John Whiteman
Sound recordist	Chris Bollard
Editor	Bill Aers
Music post production	Les Karski
Music performed by	Yothu Yindi Midnight Oil Graffiteman
Mixer	Michael Gissing
Mixed at	Digital Cut Studios
Laboratory	Vimaleyes
Length	55 minutes

Synopsis: This documentary follows Yothu Yindi, an Aboriginal band from Arnhem Land in the topics of northern Australia, as it tours over 30 North American cities with Australian rock group Midnight Oil Yothu Yindi performs traditional song and dance and contemporary rock music. *Into the Mainstream* provides an entertaining and revealing insight into a people whose cultural heritage dates back some 40,000 years

IN LANDS OF ESCAPE (working title)

Producers	John Crothers Philip Tyndall
Director	Philip Tyndall
Scriptwriter	Philip Tyndall
Prod manager	Jo Bell
Music performed by	Gerald Murnane
Length	56 mins
Gauge	16mm
Shooting stock	Eastman

Synopsis: The real and imaginary world of Australian writer Gerald Murnane

POSTCARDS FROM ROME

Prod. company	Colosimo Film Productions Pty Ltd
Dist. company	Octopus Worldwide Media Enterprises
Producer	Rosa Colosimo
Director	Luigi Acquisto
Based on the original idea by	Rosa Colosimo
Photography	Sonia Leber
Editor	Luigi Acquisto
Exec. producer	Rosa Colosimo
Prod. manager	Kellie Romain
Prod assistant	Dana Cavanio
Camera operator	Vladimir Osherov
Camera assistant	Sonia Leber
Publicity	Kellie Romain
Length	55 mins
Gauge	1" video
Shooting stock	SP Betacam

Cast: Justin O Brien, Jeffrey Smart, David Malouf Princess Borghese Anna Calandra Bernard Hickey Franco Neri, Desmond O'Grady Len Whiting, Rob Dudley

Synopsis: For decades Australian artists, tourists, writers, academics and adventurers have come to Italy to spend a few weeks or months absorbing the country s ancient culture and lyrical beauty Many of these casual visitors end up settling in Italy This documentary looks at the other side of the 'migration' coin emigration rather than immigration – and asks why an increasing number of Australians opt for a different lifestyle in Italy The emphasis throughout is on interesting and fascinating personalities

STRANGERS IN PARADISE

Prod company	Jetty Productions
Producers	Tom Zubrycki Gil Scrine
Directors	Tom Zubrycki Gil Scrine
Photography	Joel Peterson
Sound recordists	Gil Scrine Tom Zubrycki
Neg matching	Chris Rowell
Mixer	Alasdair McFarlane
Opticals	Colorfilm
Mixed at	Palm
Laboratory	Video-Film Laboratory
Budget	$130 000
Length	55 mins
Gauge	16mm

Synopsis: A documentary which follows a group of tourists on a 10-day round tour of Australia The tourists see the standard things boomerang throwing, Ayers Rock sheep stations, koalas and kangaroos in the wild However, as the tour progresses the film begins to subtly undermine these glossy clichés The result is both ugly and disturbing especially when the film shows how Aboriginal culture is sold" by white tour operators. Even this does not escape the notice of our tourists.

THANKS FOR ALL THE FISH

Prod. company	Clockwork Films/ Soundstage Australia
Producer	Andrew Hutchison
Directors	Andrew Hutchison Phil Baker
Scriptwriter	Andrew Hutchison
Photography	Phil Baker
Sound recordist	Jenny Smithiffe
Editor	Frank Zapa
Exec. producer	Robert Cocks
Prod. supervisor	John McGuckin
Prod accountant	Bob Sharp
Lighting cameraperson	Phil Baker
Camera operator	Phil Baker
Mixed at	Soundstage Australia
Budget	$100 000
Length	47 5 mins
Gauge	Broadcast video and 16mm

Synopsis A documentary exploring the phenomenon of dolphins The fact and mythology is explored and exposed as we see the animals themselves, and the humans who study enjoy and worship them Includes much exclusive and unprecedented footage of dolphins.

SHORTS

THE COLOURED PENCILS

Prod company	Frontline Films
Producer	Mark Davis
Director	Belinda Alexandrovics
Scriptwriter	Judith Alexandrovics
Based on the short story by	Kay Arthur
Photography	Roman Baska
Sound recordist	Rex Watts
Editor	Steven King
Composer	Peter Crosbie
Prod. managers	Dennis Smith Judith Alexandrovics
Continuity	Victoria Sullivan
Casting	Belinda Alexandrovics
Casting consultants	Sheila Florance Judith Alexandrovics
Camera assistant	Kate Daniels
Key grip	David Cassar
Gaffer	Rory Timony
Electrician	Peter Alexandrovics
Boom operator	Peter Clancy
Art director	Georgina Campbell
Asst art director	Camilla Cannanch
Costume designer	Richard Naylor
Make-up	Vivianne McGillicuddy
Hairdresser	Les Jenner
Wardrobe	Silva Petrovic
Special effects	Paul Newcombe Belinda Alexandrovics
Asst editor	Belinda Alexandrovics
Neg matching	VFL
Musical director	Peter Crosbie
Music performed by	Peter Crosbie
Sound editor	Rex Watts
Still photography	Sunc Baska
Animation	Funny Farm Neil Robinson
Opticals	VFL
Runner	Steven Oyston
Catering	Howard Cooper
Laboratory	VFL
Budget	$56 000
Length	26 mins
Gauge	16mm
Shooting stock	Fuji 125

Cast: Phoebe Belcher (Annie) Sheila Florance (Gran) Ailsa Piper (Mrs Smithers), Aretha Baker (Wendy)

Synopsis. This charming short film reveals a childish world It is a simple story of poverty and a little girl's quite Annie takes something she has always wanted – 72 Derwent pencils but finds, as in Dostoyevsky s *Crime and Punishment* that they give her no pleasure because her conscience gives her no rest She throws them into the creek but they don't sink ..

HAPPY BIRTHDAY MANKIND

Prod. company	Maji Productions
Producer	Martin James Thorne
Director	Martin James Thorne
Photography	Richard Werkhoven
Editor	Martin James Thorne
Assoc. producer	John Laing
Camera assistant	Julian Cole
Art director	David Sanders
Special fx make up	David Sanders
Choreographer	Fiona Stapleton
Wrangler	John Paff
Laboratory	The Video Film Company
Length	22 mins
Gauge	16mm
Shooting stock	7291

Cast: Duane Johnson (Man) Marcus Very (Dwarf) King (Himself) Nikki (Herself)

Synopsis: The last days in the life of the last man on Earth are filled with wonder, fear, loneliness and dreams. Who will inherit the garden of Eden?

I SEE, SAIT THE BLIND MAN

Prod. company	D. Patience & R. Monk
Producer	Denise Patience
Director	Roger Monk
Scriptwriter	Roger Monk
Photography	Ray Carlson
Sound recordist	Peter Clancy
Editor	Jill Holt
Prod. designer	Peter Long
Prod. manager	Lucy Maclaren
1st asst director	Brendan Lavelle
Continuity	Robyn Crawford
Focus puller	Sonia Leber
Boom operator	Steven King
Gaffer	John Brennan
Asst art directors	Noel Honingan
	Jason Beks
Make up	Simon Wain
Laboratory	VFL
Budget	$78,903
Length	20 mins
Gauge	16mm

Cast: Julian Branegan (Stewart) Robert Lyons (Greg) Judith Stratford (Janet) Nicki Wendt (Lucinda) Mark Trewerrow (Bob Downe).

Synopsis: A group of disabled terrorists inadvertently find themselves the reluctant kidnappers of the newly crowned Miss South Eastern States, Lucinda Fellows. The situation becomes more complicated, and a few home truths are revealed.

JOPET PISMO (ANOTHER TELEGRAM)

Prod. company	AFTRS
Producer	Ivo Burum
Director	Ivo Burum
Scriptwriter	Ivo Burum
Photography	Rev Carlson
Sound recordist	Raman
Editor	Simon James
Sound editor	Felicity Neale
Composer	Marvella Hatfield
Production manager	David Lake
Production assistant	Walter Velazquez
Asst directors	Stan Leman
	Vladimir Burum
	Kate Greve
Camera assistant	David Richardson
Grip	Stewart Green
Gaffer	Tony Mandl
Boom operator	Richard Clark
Art department	Anne O Dey
	Deirdre Gibbin
Stunt driving	Mike Nikol
Make up	Anne Marie Hurley
Continuity	Marie Forzani
Catering	Maria Burum
Sound mix	Justin Collins
Sound engineers	Paul Neeson
	Rick Davis
Music arranger	Alan Isles
Musicians	Peter Brown
	Neville Boyle
	Rob Weaver
	Dean Edgecombe
Titles	Graham Sharpe
	Mart Mawson
Consultant	Ross McGregor
	Marnie Oral
Laboratory	VFL
Length	28 mins
Gauge	16mm
Shooting stock	7297 7292

Cast: Vladimir Leriski (Janka), Sylvain Brooks (Frane) Anna Cerdic (Kate) Vladimir Burum (Pero) Mike Nikol (Owner) Maria Burum (Ana), Cleo Constantinou (Teacher) Ivea Burum (Janka's Dad) Richard Leman (Frane's Dad) Warren Rapuseti (Young Janka), Cynthia (Young Frane) Footscray Tech (Basketball Team)

Synopsis: A migrant family is faced with a dilemma when an elderly relative back home becomes ill. While the family considers whether to return, conflicting loyalties and aspirations become obvious. Tensions increase between the family members.

TAHLIA'S VOICE

Prod. company	Lis Andrews & Deborah Copeland
Producer	Deborah Copeland
Director	Lis Andrews
Scriptwriter	Lis Andrews
Based on the original idea by	Lis Andrews
Photography	Matthew Kelley
Editor	Peter Pritchard
Prod. manager	Deborah Copeland
Prod. assistant	Colette McKenna
Camera operator	Carlo Sirali
Art director	Penny West
Budget	$36 598
Length	12 minutes
Gauge	16mm

Synopsis: A story of sexual obsession, an artist in Victorian times explores that obsession through a complex mosaic of past and present, reality and fantasy, the focus of which is her endlessly repeated series of drawings.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Producers	Greg Woodland
	Kristin Sanderson
Director	Greg Woodland
Scriptwriter	Greg Woodland
Photography	Kriv Stenders
Sound	Robert Lennon
	Neridah Cooper
Editor	Leanne Glassen
Composer	Robert Moss
1st asst director	Charles Ansden
Prod. manager	Kristin Sanderson

Cast: Phillip Dodd Shane Connor Lisa Cassanna Greg O Donovan Belinda Chayko

Synopsis: Mike is the producer of a TV current affairs program, badly in need of a good story. Geoff is an amiable random killer who wants only to appear on TV singing a song by his hero, Tom Jones. Mike and Geoff need each other ... does anyone else?

THE TENTH MAN

Prod. company	Atmosphere Films
Producer	Mark Osborn
Director	Mark Osborn
Scriptwriter	Mark Osborn
Based on the original idea by	James Joyce
Photography	Sue Roberts
Editor	Jack Eldredge
Composer	Luke Blackburn
Prod. manager	Jane Grundell
Prod. accountant	George Zaiona
Prod. assistant	Kathleen Hiatt
Camera assistant	Vincenzo Antonetti
Key grip	Nigel Hume
Art director	Mark Hobbs
Wardrobe	Annie Hewitt
Neg. matching	Ursula Jung
Narrator	Brian Nankervis
Still photography	Emmy Wanden
Catering	Elizabeth Coleman
	Modna Factua
Studios	Mixed Bumpers Studios
Laboratory	VFL
Lab liaison	Steve Mitchell
Length	13 mins
Gauge	Anamorphic 16mm
Shooting stock	7291

Cast: Brian Nankervis (The Voice), Mark Hobbs (The Image)

Synopsis: Ted Wilson is a poet with a Bolex and a head full of dreams. A rollercoaster ride through his modern consciousness as he confronts the reality of his life and the possibilities of total television. A comedy/art film in cinemascope 16mm.

THE THIRD WAVE

Prod. company	Efex Pty Ltd
Producer	Doug Hawkins
Director	James Fogle
Scriptwriter	Doug Hawkins
Based on the original idea by	Jan Nightingale
	Richard Daniel
Photography	Greg Low
Sound recordist	Don Connelly
Editor	Andrew Arestides
Composer	Mathew Delahunty
Prod. manager	Doug Hawkins
1st asst director	Tony Wellington
2nd asst director	Nicki Long
Continuity	Kristen Vannatard
Camera operator	Roger Buckingham
Camera assistant	Phil Murphy
Key grip	Ray Micu
Gaffer	Richard Cairns
Boom operator	Graham McKinney
Art director	Fiona Spence
Asst art director	Margret Davis
Make up	Robern Pickering

Wardrobe — Lyn London
Props — Rob Mucham
Neg. cutting — Chris Russell
Tech. adviser — NSW AIDS Bureau
Best boy — Peter Rasmussen
Runner — Tracy Taylor
Catering — AVOLON
Mixed at — Audio Lock
Laboratory — VFC
Budget — $64 000
Gauge — 16mm
Shooting stock — Kodak 7291
Cast: Marcus Graham (Pete), Ben Mendelsohn (Shane), Beth Buchanan (Melissa), Gia Carides (Vicki), Jamie Oxenbould (Mick), Georgina Banks (Sue), Kerry McKay (Dave), Anne Byron (Sue's Mum), Geoff Morrell (Doctor)
Synopsis: This story revolves around five Year 12 students who have just left school. An old friend comes into their world. Unfortunately for one of them she is carrying the AIDS virus. A discussion starter on the entry of the AIDS virus into the teenagers' heterosexual world

FILM AUSTRALIA PTY LTD

ABORIGINAL EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Prod. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Producer — Janet Bell
Director — Martin Daley
Scriptwriter — Martin Daley
Photography — Joanna Parker, Fred Keyworth
Sound recordists — Neenda Cooper, Jack O'Brien
Editor — Lisa Ann Morris
Prod. manager — Carriona Macmillan
Prod. secretary — Jane Benson
Prod. accountant — Waldemar Wawryzuk
Prod. assistant — Jane Benson
Publicity — Jane Glen
Marketing — John Swindells
Length — 20 mins
Gauge — Video
Synopsis: A tape to introduce Aboriginal communities to some of the enterprises they could be starting up in order to offer employment to members of the community

AND A FUTURE FOR ALL

Prod. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Dist. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Producer — Paul Humfress
Director — Ian Mouzo
Scriptwriter — Con Anemogiannis
Photography — Steve Windon, David Knaus, Greg Lowe
Sound recordists — Bronwyn Murphy, Don Connolly, Lee Sullivan
Editors — Robin Archer, Denise Haslem
Exec. producer — Paul Humfress
Prod. manager — Ron Hannam
Unit manager — Con Anemogiannis
Prod. accountant — Elizabeth Clarke
Editing assistants — Helen Martin, Harmat McKern
Publicity — Jane Glen
Marketing/promotions — John Swindells
Laboratory — Atlab Australia
Lab. liaison — Kern Jenkins
Length — 6x30 mins
Shooting stock — Eastmancolor
Synopsis: A series of six programs that would raise issues, increase the audience's anxiety and make viewers aware of the many welfare problems that exist and suggest alternative systems of dealing with the problems of the underprivileged both within Australia and overseas

ARMY OFFICER CASETS

Prod. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Dist. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Producer — Sonia Humphrey
Director — Maureen Murphy
Scriptwriter — Sonia Humphrey
Exec. producer — Paul Humphress
Prod. manager — Ron Hannam
Prod. secretary — Elizabeth Clarke
Marketing/promotions — John Swindells
Length — 8 12 mins
Shooting stock — 16mm Eastmancolour
Synopsis: A short recruitment film to be shown to potential applicants, influencer groups and those already expressing an interest in a career as an Army officer. It details the career of an officer up to the rank of Major in all the major corps and methods of getting there.

THE SOMS IN YOUR BACKYARD

Prod. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Producer — Geoff Barnes
Researcher — Emma Gordon
Exec. producer — Janet Bell
Prod. manager — Carriona Macmillan
Prod. secretary — Jane Benson
Prod. accountant — Waldemar Wawryzuk
Marketing/promotions — John Swindells
Publicity — Jane Glen
Length — 25 mins
Cast: Victoria Taylor, Stephen Page (Dancers)
Synopsis: Man lives in a world of light and colour. This film will focus on the various human attributes of colour, using dance, music, lighting and sets

COMMUNITY SERVICES & HEALTH

Prod. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Producer — Janet Bell
Scriptwriter — Stephen Ramsey
Prod. manager — Carriona Macmillan
Prod. secretary — Jane Benson
Prod. accountant — Waldemar Wawryzuk
Prod. assistant — Jane Benson
Publicity — Jane Gale
Marketing coordinator — John Swindells
Length — 5x5 mins
Synopsis: Five five minute programs for the Department of Community Services and Health about polydrug use

FRED WILLIAMS (working title)

Prod. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Dist. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Director — Christina Wilson
Photography — Erika Addis
Sound recordists — Mark Tarpey, Bronwyn Murphy, Robert Hayes
Editor — Denise Haslem
Exec. producers — Bruce Moir, Anya Ziegler
Assoc. producer — Lisa Noonan
Prod. manager — John Russell
Unit manager — Trish Fitzsimons
Prod. secretary — Kathy Grant
Prod. arrangement — Albert Wong
Prod. assistant — Marguerite Grey
Music composed by — Felicity Foxe
Sound editor — Harriet McKern
Editing assistant — Harriet McKern
Publicity — Jane Glen
Marketing/promotions coordinator — Martin Wood
Laboratory — Colorfilm
Length — 50 mins
Gauge — 16mm
Synopsis: A television documentary on the life and work of painter Fred Williams.

HOW'S YOUR FORM

Prod. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Producer — Janet Bell
Director — Paul Harmon
Scriptwriter — Lynne Broad
Prod. manager — Carriona Macmillan
Prod. secretary — Jane Benson
Prod. accountant — Waldemar Wawryzuk
Publicity — Jane Glen
Marketing/promotions — John Swindells
Length — 10 mins
Gauge — Video
Synopsis: An instructional videotape for Department of Veterans' Affairs to inform applicants and potential applicants for T & PI benefits providing advice and instructions on filling in required forms.

NMAS CERBERUS

Prod. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Dist. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Producer — Sonia Humphrey
Director — Frank Hamons
Scriptwriter — Frank Hamons
Length — 25 mins
Synopsis: A recruiting film for the Navy to be shown to those who have already expressed an interest in joining up, explaining the content and activities of the three months they will spend at HMAS Cerberus, if they decide to enlist.

KAKADU PUPPETS (working title)

Prod. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Dist. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Director — Michael Balson
Photography — John Hosking
Sound recordist — Max Heusser
Editor — Michael Balson
Exec. producers — Bruce Moir, Tristram Miall
Prod. coordinator — Glenda Carpenter
Prod. manager — John Russell
Prod. secretary — Kathy Grant
Prod. accountant — Simon Lenthan
Still photography — Carmen Ky
Publicity — Jane Glen
Marketing — Martin Wood
Laboratory — Video Film Company
Length — 50 mins
Gauge — 16mm
Synopsis: A documentary for television illustrating the Marionette Theatre of Australia's innovative puppet play *Kakadu*, from first draft to opening night. Inspired by Bill Neidje's book, *Kakaduman*, the puppet play written by Aboriginal playwright Vivian Walker, brings Bill Neidje's message to the stage in a lively production aimed at a wide family audience

MALPRACTICE

Prod. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Dist. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Producer — Tristram Miall
Director — Bill Bennett
Scriptwriter — Jennifer Ainge
Photography — Steve Arnold
Sound recordist — Max Hanaser
Editor — Denise Hunter
Exec. producer — Bruce Moir
Assoc. producer — Jennifer Ainge
Prod. manager — John Russell
Prod. secretary — Kathy Grant
Prod. accountant — Simon Lenthen
Prod. assistant — Jo Ann McGowan
1st asst. director — Carrie Sotterbeck
Camera assistant — Adrian Griffin
Boom operator — Chris Roland
Make-up — Ruth Bracegirdle
Wardrobe — Ruth Bracegirdle
Props — Ruth Bracegirdle
Sound editor — Dany Cooper
Editing assistant — Dany Cooper
Publicity — Jane Glen
Marketing — Martin Wood
Catering — Gerry Billings
Laboratory — Atlab
Length — 94 mins
Gauge — 16mm
Cast: Caz Lederman, Bob Barnes, Ian Gilmore, Charles Little, Pat Thompson, Janet Stanley, Rebecca Frith, Dorothy Alison, Nicole Smith, Amanda Hughes, Bernadette Ryan, Earl Cross
Synopsis: A television which uses actors, doctors and members of the legal profession. The fictionalized storyline explores the forces that come into play when something goes wrong in hospital.

MILITARY SKILLS

Prod. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Dist. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Producer — Sonia Humphrey
Scriptwriter — Frank Hamons
Editor — Frank Hamons
Exec. producer — Paul Humfress
Prod. manager — Ron Hannam
Prod. accountant — Elizabeth Clarke
Publicity — Jane Glen
Marketing/promotions — John Windells
Gauge — Video
Shooting stock — U matic
Synopsis: Scripting and editing of material shot by the Army during a military skills contest between eight countries held in 1988

MOSEY MASTERS

Prod. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Producer — Geoff Barnes
Director — Paul Hawker
Scriptwriter — Ian Reinecke
Based on the book by — Ian Reinecke
Exec. producer — Janet Bell
Prod. manager — Carriona Macmillan
Prod. secretary — Jane Benson
Prod. accountant — Waldemar Wawryzuk
Publicity — Jane Glen
Marketing — John Swindells
Length — 6x 30 mins
Synopsis: A series which shows how technology and deregulation are transforming banking.

PARENTING

Prod. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Producer — Janet Bell
Scriptwriters — Peter Clarke, Vicki Velkoff
Prod. manager — Carriona Macmillan
Prod. secretary — Jane Benson
Prod. accountant — Waldemar Wawryzuk
Publicity — Jane Glen
Marketing — John Swindells
Length — 10 mins
Gauge — 1" video
Cast: Peter Clarke (Presenter)
Synopsis: An A to Z of parenting in Australia today

PLAY MAKERS/MUSIC MAKERS

Prod. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Producer — Janet Bell
Researcher — Mary Colbert
Prod. manager — Carriona Macmillan
Prod. secretary — Jane Benson
Prod. accountant — Waldemar Wawryzuk
Publicity — Jane Glen
Marketing — John Swindells
Length — 2 series of 4 x 20 mins
Gauge — Video/film
Synopsis: *Play Makers* is a series for upper primary school about the world of the theatre from the point of view of the director, writer, designer and performer. *Music Makers* is a series for primary school which explores the world of music making through themes such as the composer, the instrument-makers, the conductor and the orchestra

A SENSE OF IDENTITY

Prod. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Dist. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Producer — Sonia Humphrey
Researcher — Tracey Manner
Exec. producer — Paul Humfress
Prod. manager — Ron Hannam
Marketing/promotions — John Swindells
Length — 30-40 mins
Synopsis: The changing role of Aboriginal women and the social developments against which these changes have occurred. The film aims to educate the general public on the important role and community developments that have involved Aboriginal women and to give Aboriginal women a sense of identity

SPECIAL EDUCATION MAGAZINE

Prod. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Dist. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Producer — Paul Humfress
Scriptwriter/research — Jebby Philips
Exec. producer — Paul Humfress
Publicity — Jane Glen
Marketing/promotions — John Swindells
Length — 30 mins
Gauge — Video
Synopsis: A proposed 50-minute non broadcast television magazine to be distributed to schools for young people with conversational or intellectual disabilities

TO ABSENT FRIENDS

Prod. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Dist. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Producer — Paul Humfress
Director — Peter McLean
Scriptwriter — Paula Dawson
From an original idea by — Paula Dawson
Photography — Ross King
Sound recordist — Howard Spry, Rodney Simmons, Noel Cunnington
Exec. producer — Paul Humfress
Prod. managers — Alison Wedderspoon, Ron Hannam
Prod. accountant — Neil Cousins, Elizabeth Clarke
Prod. assistant — Michael Rogowski
Camera assistant — Robyn Peterson, John Scott
Gaffer — Jonathon Hughes
Publicity — Jane Glen
Marketing — John Swindells
Synopsis: *To Absent Friends* traces the concept and construction of Paul Dawson's most recent work, a fully functional barroom. All reflective surfaces will be her holographic images reconstructed from a past New Year's Eve event. The final environment is an exploration of memory at work and the infinite quality of time.

SPDATE JINDALEE

Prod. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Dist. company — Film Australia Pty Ltd
Producer — Sonia Humphrey
Director — Ian Hoot
Scriptwriter — Ian Hoot
Photography — Russell Galloway
Sound recordist — John Schefelbein
Exec. producer — Paul Humfress
Prod. manager — Ron Hannam
Prod. accountant — Elizabeth Clarke

Prod assistant	Wendy Rimon
Camera assistant	Mark Tomlinson
Marketing/promotions	John Swindells
Length	25 mins
Gauge	16mm
Shooting stock	Eastmancolour

Synopsis: Jindalee, Australia's world beating over the horizon radar will operate as a vital link in Australia's Northern defences

FILM VICTORIA

CHILD PROTECTION VIDEO

Exec. producer	Russell Porter
Length	30 mins
Gauge	Betacam

Synopsis: This video on child maltreatment will be for use in workshops and seminars by Child Protection staff. It aims to promote an informed response among professionals who work with children

CHILDREN'S COURT

Exec. producer	Ann Darrouzet
Scriptwriter	Steve Westh
Length	15-20 mins
Gauge	Betacam

Synopsis: This video for the Legal Aid Commission will be aimed at easing the apprehension of a young person who has to appear in the Children's Court. It will show what the court looks like, what happens during a hearing, and what sort of powers the Court has.

NURSE EDUCATION VIDEOS
Mental Retardation

Prod. company	Massive Media and Entertainment
Director	Rob Grant
Scriptwriter	Rob Grant
Photography	Nick Kohler
Sound recordist	Pat Slater
Exec. producer	Russell Porter
Length	10 mins

Synopsis: This video will show the vocational benefits of specialising in mental retardation nursing. It will also promote the college based nursing courses.

NURSE EDUCATION VIDEOS
Psychiatric

Producer	Joanna Bell
Director	Kathy Armstrong
Scriptwriter	Kathy Armstrong
Editor	Kathy Armstrong
Exec. producer	Russell Porter
Length	10 mins

Synopsis: This video will show the vocational benefits of specializing in psychiatric nursing. It will also promote the college based nursing courses.

NEW SOUTH WALES FILM AND TELEVISION OFFICE

GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

Prod. company	30 Seconds
Producer	Mark Newman
Director	Mark Waters
Scriptwriter	Rodney Long
Prod. manager	Ann Stone
Editor	Nick Pandoulis
Lighting cameraperson	Malcolm Barrows
Laboratory	Colorfilm/VTS
Length	15 minutes
Gauge	16mm to U-matic tape

Synopsis. To encourage better solid waste disposal this film was produced for the New South Wales Metropolitan Waste Disposal Authority. Its primary audience is young people in schools. Through dramatization the film shows that landfilling of waste is a suitable and acceptable method, that it is being used, and that it is environmentally sound. A broad ranging audience would enjoy this film.

JURY DUTY – A REWARDING RESPONSIBILITY

Prod. company	McPhee Productions Pty Ltd
Producers	Ian Adkins Karl McPhee
Director	Karl McPhee
Prod. manager	Cana Stephen
Editors	David Tindale Alan Heslin
Lighting cameraperson	Andrew Fraser
Laboratory	Edi Point PPS
Length	15 mins
Gauge	Betacam to 1"

Synopsis Produced for the Official Fifth Sheriff of New South Wales (Attorney General's Department) this video is primarily for people who have been called for jury service. It explains through dramatization of a re-enacted 'case', and through the presenter (the Sheriff) how a person is called and what to expect through the case. It is an informative, awareness-raising video which is expected to be widely used by other groups

PERSPECTIVES ON INTEGRATION OF STUDENTS WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

Prod. company	Jason Olivier Production Services
Producer	Jason Olivier
Director	Jason Olivier
Scriptwriter	Garry Sergeant
Prod. manager	Karen Myers
Editors	Peter Rechta Stuart Eastead
Lighting cameraperson	Jon Matthews
Laboratory	Elliott Street Productions
Length	25 mins
Gauge	Betacam to 1"

Synopsis: This video shows that the integration of students with intellectual disabilities into regular school environments is been increasingly practised in New South Wales and is working effectively for the benefit of all students within the system. We visit seven schools and see that children are enrolled in a regular class with additional support in a support class in a regular school, and in a specific purpose school. Produced for the New South Wales Department of Education

PORT OF BOTANY BAY

Prod. company	Newfilms
Producer	Peter Anderson
Director	Tony Hertz
Scriptwriter	Rodney Long
Prod. manager	Robyn Michael
Editor	Max Aronsten
Lighting cameraperson	Kevin Rigby
Laboratory	Newfilms
Length	10 mins,10 mins; 15 secs
Gauge	Betacam to 1"

Synopsis: Produced for the Port of Botany Bay (Maritime Services Board of New South Wales) these three videos are for differing audiences. The first is to promote trade with overseas countries, the second is to notify other Australian shipping organisations of the facilities and equipment offered at the port; the third is for local community and school groups highlighting the balance the MSB maintains between earning for the environment and the activities of the port.

SUPPORT TEACHER – LEARNING DIFFICULTIES
1. PRIMARY 2. SECONDARY

Prod. company	Silvergrass Communications Pty Ltd
Producer	Sandra Hall
Director	Michael Mundell
Scriptwriter	Michael Mundell
Prod. manager	Jo Malcolm
Editors	Julia Hickson Jack Swart
Laboratory	Visualeyes Productions
Length	11 mins 30 secs; 11 mins 30 secs
Gauge	Betacam to 1"

Synopsis: These two videos aim to demonstrate a whole school approach to children's learning difficulties and to provide a model for support teachers in schools. An actor plays the lead role in each video. Produced for the New South Wales Education Department

SITTING NEXT TO NELLY

Prod. company	Davis Film and Video Productions Limited
Producer	Cathy Miller
Director	Linda Blagg
Scriptwriter	Geoffrey Newman
Prod. manager	Cathy Miller
Editors	Philip McGuire John Agapitos
Lighting cameraperson	Philip Bull
Laboratory	Meredith Productions
Length	12 mins 30 secs
Gauge	Betacam to 1"

Synopsis: Produced for principals and executives in the New South Wales Department of Education, this video raises issues related to multicultural education and leadership. Through dramatization we see one school moving away from the almost inevitable International Day in a way of working with parents and children that is different and innovative

TELEVISION PRE-PRODUCTION

RUBBER SLAVES OF THE AMAZON

Prod. company	Batavia Massacre Pty Ltd
Producers	Santhana Naidu Henri Bource Russell Hurley
Director	John Ruane
Scriptwriter	Russell Hurley
Editor	Russell Hurley
Prod. manager	Brendan Lavelle
Art director	Paul Antzoboll
Laboratory	VFL
Budget	$956 000
Length	90 mins
Gauge	16mm

Synopsis When two young Americans stumble on a rubber baron murdering his tappers en masse they find it difficult to rally world opinion against South American rubber

TELEVISION PRODUCTION

ACROPOLIS NOW

Prod. company	Crawford Productions
Producer	Peter Herbert
Director	Tad Emery
Scriptwriters	Simon Palomares Nick Giannopoulos George Kapinaris
Off-line editor	Jo Rosas
Post prod. supervisor	Dea Liebenberg
Exec. producers	Jan Bradley Gary Fanton Vince Sims
Prod. supervisor	Kimanie Jones-Hameister
Prod. coordinator	Jeff Shenker
Prod. accountant	Coyla Hegarty
Assistant to producer	Peter Herbert
Script editor	Julia Guerne
Script consultant	Julie Bates
Director's assistant	Jan Pottifer
Casting	Phil Bowler
Camera	Steve Stoble Shane Gagg Hank Eykman Jack Degenkamp
Technical directors	Tek K. Beh Timothy Coulson
Vision switcher	Jonathan Olb
Vision assistant	Darren White
Lighting	Robbie Cox Frank Racusa Greg Rawson Russell Howard
Audio electrician	John Budge Paul Indiamo Russell McAlese
Boom operator	Colin Swan Scott Finlay
Art director	Georgia Greenhill
Floor managers	Kevin Carlin Rebecca de Rego
Make up	Barbara Cousins Katharina Archer
Wardrobe	Valeria Nelson
Props	Dane Clark
Set decorator	Jill Eden
Studio hands	Ray Ackerley Lindsay Pugh Adam Pierzak Sergei Adamov Daniel Brennan
Video tape	Rod Taylor Ken Hardie Vivien Turco Miranda Howlett
Video post-prod.	John Barber
Audio post prod	Paul Reeve
Sound editor	Anne Carter
Network publicity	Sally Flynn
Unit publicist	Susan Elizabeth Wood
Stock	HSV 7
Gauge	1" video

Cast: Nick Giannopoulos (Jim) Simon Palomares (Rick) George Kapinaris (Memo) Tracey Callender (Liz) Simon Thorpe (Skip) George Vidalis (Manolis)

Synopsis Kostas leaves his son Jim in charge of the Acropolis Cafe, but you should see the Acropolis Now.

ALL THE RIVERS RUN II

Prod. company	Crawford Productions
Producer	Alan Hardy
Director	John Power
Scriptwriters	Vince Moran Barbara Bishop
Based on the novel by	Nancy Cato
Photography	Dan Burstall
Sound recordist	Lloyd Carrick
Editor	Kerry Regan
Prod. designer	Robert Perkins
Exec. producer	Ian Bradley
Assoc. producers	Vince Sims Helen Watts
Prod. supervisor	Vince Sims
Prod. coordinator	Bernadette O'Mahony
Prod. manager	Helen Watts
Location manager	Leigh Antzoulboll
Prod. accountant	Ron Sinot
1st asst director	Brian Giddens
2nd asst director	Hamish McSporran
3rd asst director	Jo Freman
Continuity	Sue Wiley
Producer's assistant	Galia Hardy
Casting	Jan Pontifex
Focus puller	Harry Glynatsis
Clapper/loader	Kathy Chambers
Key grip	Ken Connor
Asst grip	Alastair Reilly
Gaffer	Lanne Fish
Best boy	Jim Larver
Genny operator	Adam Williams
Boom operator	Chris Goldsmith
Asst art director	Steven Jones Evans
Costume designer	Clare Griffin
Make-up	Jose Perez
Hairdresser	Cheryl Williams
Wardrobe supervisor	Marion Boyce
Wardrobe standby	John Shea Rachel Nott
Props buyer	Martin Perkins
Standby props	Graham Blackmore
Special effects	Brian Pearce
Set dressers	Colin Robertson Tony Rippon
Construction manager	Gordon White
Construction foreman	Peter McNee
Mineral director	Bruce Rowland
Stunts coordinator	Chris Anderson
Stunts	New Generation Stunts
Still photography	Bill Bachman
Dialogue coach	Peter Tulloch
Wrangler	John Baird
Runners	Sara Probyn Marcus Hunt
Unit publicist	Susan Elizabeth Wood
Catering	Bande Aida Catering
Studios	Crawfords Australia
Mixed at	VFL
Budget	$4 million
Length	2x2 hours
Gauge	16mm
Shooting stock	Kodak 7247

Cast: John Waters (Brenton), Nikki Coghill (Delie) Rick Tingwell (Uncle Charles)

Synopsis: A sequel to the highly successful *All The Rivers Run*. This story is of the loves and hardships Brenton and Philadelphia face as they struggle to stay together facing the adversities of a dying river trade.

AUSTRALIA'S MOST WANTED

Prod. company	Grundy Television
Producer	Margaret Slatke
Directors	Andrew Freedman David Morgan Erik Steen Igor Auzins
Scriptwriters	Malcolm Tennent Peter Bernardos Julie Money Russell Webb
Script editors	Gunny Lowndes John Coulter John Huggonson
Exec. producers	Philip East Peter Prime
Prod. supervisor	Stephen Jones
Prod. coordinators	Barbara Rung Lisa Harrison
Prod. manager	Vicki Popplewell
Unit managers	Rob Short Sean Clayton
Prod. secretary	Tony Forsyth
Prod. accountant	Scott Hibbert
Prod. assistants	Laura Haves Adrian Pickersgill Peter Conroy Peter Fitzgerald
1st asst director	Stewart Wright
2nd asst director	Adam Spence
Continuity	Kay Hennessy Linda Ray Shirley Ballard Sam Fitzsimons
Casting	Sue Mauger
Researchers	Ben Cheshire Allen Mathieson Karen Jarrett Kay Bendle
Research assistant	Alexandra Keller
Music editor	Gary Hardman
Gaffers	Graham Mulder John Englar
Director's assistant	Kristin Vrumont
Art directors	Tom Raves Vivian Wilson
Asst art director	Brian W. Alexander
Art dept coordinator	Lee John Bulgin
Make up	Vit Mepham Belinda Burke Rochelle Ford
Hairdressers	Heather McLaren

	Victoria Thompson
	Gail Mayes
Wardrobe	Julie Barton
	Phillipa Hall
Wardrobe asst	Kate Boulch
Props buyer	John Carroll
Standby props	Johanna Blanco
	Steve Haig

Cast: Bryan Marshall (Host)
Synopsis: Program seeking public help to assist the police in solving current crimes.

BEYOND TOMORROW

Prod company	Beyond Productions Pty Ltd
Dist company	Beyond International Group Inc
Producer	Ian Cross
Director	Geoff Tanner
Exec producer	Peter Abbott
Assoc producers	Shayne Collier
	Pete Newbolt
	Eileen Tuohy
	Geoff Fitzpatrick
	Brigitte Zinsinger
	Tim Warner
	Ian Stenner
Correspondents	Gary Cobberley
	Jean Hill
	Susan Hunt
	Randy Meier
	Richard Wiese
Prod manager	Livia Hanich
Prod coordinator	Vicki Agg
Prod secretary	Clementine Griffin
Prod. accountant	Barbara Brown
Post prod coordinator	Amanda Hickey
Post prod assistant	Marina Williams
Research coordinator	Ruth Parnell
Researchers	Anna Carter
	Victor Marsh
	Frances Thompson
	Marsha Bennett
Studio producer	Chris Hawkshaw
Studio floor manager	Ian White
Composer	Twilight Productions
	Murray Burns
	Colin Bayley
Computer graphics	Matthew Armenyhan
Lighting camera	Hans Heidrich
	Michael Oates
	Michael Ewers
	David Collins
	Barry West
Mixers	Mark Tanner
	Julian Ellingworth
Offline editors	Ray Neale
	Nick Glover
	Andrew Barnes
	Peter Buchta
	Cliff Cerasoli
Original music performed by	Twilight Productions
	Murray Burns
	Colin Bayley
	Kevin Bayley
Sound editor	Cate Cahill
Sound recordists	Rowland McManus
	Rira Castro
	Graham Wyse
	Martin Harrington
	Robert Harle
CMX editor	Bruce Hancock
Studio lighting director	Richard Curtis
Studio make-up	Madonna Melrose
Publicity	Cheryl Conway
	Scott Penza
Studio	Pro image
Post prod. video	Videolab
Standards conversion	VTC Los Angeles
Length	22x1 hour
Gauge	1" Dolby A video

Synopsis. Five American reporters travel the world to monitor the latest developments in science and technology

BEYOND 2000

Prod. company	Beyond Productions Pty Ltd
Dist company	Beyond International Group
Producer	Tim Cincas
Director	Judith John Story
Photography	various
Sound recordists	various
Editors	Harley Oliver
	Robert Davidson
	Mark Verkerk
Composer	Twilight Productions
Exec. producer	Peter Abbott
Prod. secretary	Therese Hagerty
Prod accountants	Ara Saharagian
Camera operator	various
Boom operator	various
Make up	various
Hairdresser	Warren Hanrahan
Props	David King
Props buyer	David King
Special effects	Cinaom video
Set designer	Freddie Lawrence
Set construction	Up-Set Pty Ltd
Musical directors	Murray Burns
	Colin Bayley
Music performed by	Twilight Productions
Sound editor	Julian Ellingworth
Mixer	Julian Ellingworth
Still photography	various
Tech adviser	Charlie Busby
Publicity	Michael Shepherd
	Georgine Harvey
Studios	ATN 7
Mixed at	Beyond Facilities
Length	1 hour
Gauge	1" video

Cast: Ian Finlay, Jeff Wasson, Chris Ardill, Gunnes, Simon Nasht, Amanda Kellett, Simon Reeve, Maxine Grey, Bryan Smith (presenters)
Synopsis: *Beyond 2000* is a one hour weekly television program exploring the progress of science and technology. It features the latest scientific breakthroughs and ingenious technical innovations which are shaping the world and preparing us for life beyond the year 2000

CASSIDY

Prod company	Archive Films Pty Ltd/ABC
Producer	Rob Weis
Line producer	Tony Winley
Director	Carl Schultz
Scriptwriter	Joanna Murray Smith
Line director	Tony Winley
Based on the novel by	Morris West
Photography	Ellery Ryan
Sound recordist	Nick Wood
Editors	Tony Kavanagh
	Lyn Sally
Prod designer	Murray Pickett
Composer	Paul Grabowsky
Exec. producer	Sandra Levy
Assoc. producer	Wayne Barry
Prod manager	Carol Chirhan
Prod co ordinator	Shona Burdett
Unit manager	John Downie
Location manager	Maude Heath
Prod secretary	Kerrie Mainwaring
1st asst director	Scott Hartford Davies
2nd asst director	Tony Tilse
3rd asst director	Russell Burton
Continuity	Rhonda McAvoy
Producer's asst.	Anne-Marie Gaskin
Casting	Liz Mullinar
Extras casting	Sue Walsh
Casting consultant	Liz Mullinar
Camera operator	Paul Costello
Focus puller	Andrew McClymont
Clapper loader	Greg Heap
Key grip	John Bunningford
Asst grip	Gary Harden
2nd unit photography	Geoff Marcus
Gaffer	Tim Jones
Electrician	Ken Partridge
Boom operator	Chris Nilsen
Art director	Graham Johnson
Costume designer	Jolanta Nejman
Make up	Susie Clerne
	Jean Petch
Wardrobe coordinator	Colleen Woulfe
Wardrobe asst	Phillipa Western
	Lorraine Verhayen
Props	Peter Fitzgerald
	Benn Hyde
	Anton Cannon
Props buyer	Paddy McDonald
	Susan Glavich
Special effects	Peter Leggett
Set dressers	Robert Hutchinson
	Tim Tulk
Scenic artist	Paul Brockebank
Standby carpenter	Ian Rhodes
Set construction	Laurie Dorn
Neg matching	Pamela Toose
Standby set finisher	Bill Kennedy
Sound editor	Lionel Bush
Editing assistants	Nicole La Macchia
	Fabian Squire
Mixer	Mark Walker
Asst mixer	Ian Nelson
Stunts coordinator	Chris Anderson
Still photography	Virginia Speers
Amenities	Geoff McDonell
Runner	Warren Parsonson
Publicity	Virginia Sargent
Unit publicist	Di White
Catering	A& B Catering
Studios	ABC Frenchs Forest
Mixed at	ABC Gore Hill
Laboratory	Adlab
Length	4x58 mins
Gauge	16mm

Cast: Caroline Goodall, Bill Hunter, Philip Quast, Martin Shaw, Pauline Chan, Peter Carroll, Tracy Mann, Pat Bishop, Stephen Payne
Synopsis: Cassidy is the Premier of New South Wales who, on his doorbell, nominates his estranged daughter as executor of his estate. A story of corruption, murder and political intrigue against a background of Sydney, Hong Kong and London

A COUNTRY PRACTICE

Prod company: JNP Films Pty Ltd
Dist company: Australian Television Network
Producers: Denny Lawrence, Bill Searle
Directors: Robert Mullion, Leigh Spence, Peter Maxwell, Chris Martin-Jones
Scriptwriters: David Phillips, Judy Colquhoun, Micky Becker
Script editors: Robyn Sindelar, Susan Ellis, Patrick Flanagan
Based on the idea by: James Davern
Exec. producer: James Davern
Prod. coordinator: Barbara Luna
Prod. manager: David Ward
Unit manager: Margo Cremin
Location manager: Peter Warman
Prod. secretary: Toni Higginbotham
Prod. accountant: Lucy Vorst
Floor managers: Ian Simmons, Richard McGrath, Mark Moroney
Asst floor managers: Andrew Turner, Peter Dudkin
Directors' assistants: Karen Moore, Stephanie Richards, Karen Willing
Producer's assistants: Justine Slater, Pip Nacatel
Casting: Shauna Crowley
Camera operators: Glen Steel (OB), Peter Wardley, Kim Schwartz, Michael Healey
Camera assistants: Dietrich Beck (OB), Mark Mitchell
Boom operator: Steve Mott
Art director: Rachael de Santis
Make up: Veyane Hirst, Joanne Stevens
Wardrobe: Therese Rendle
Wardrobe asst: Alan Harris, Amanda Bloomfield
Props: Wayne Pickard, Malcolm Gregory, Dirk Van Den Dungen
Props buyer: John Lucini
Tech. adviser: Wendy O Donnell, Linda McGrail, Jenni Wilks
Set decorator: Douglas Kelly
Publicity: Kathy Campbell
Catering: Taste Buddies
Studios: ATN Seven
Mixed at: Custom Video
Shooting stock: 1" video
Cast: Shane Porteous (Dr Terence Elliott), Lorraine Desmond (Shirley Gilroy), John Tarrant (Matt Tyler), Brian Wenzel (Sgt. Frank Gilroy), Kate Raison (Cathy Hayden), Joyce Jacobs (Esme Watson), Joan Sydney (Marion Sloan), Syd Heylen (Cookie Lock), Gordon Piper (Bob Hatfield), Joan Sydney (Marion Sloan), George Parker (Lucy Gardiner), Michael Muntz (Dr Chris Kouros)
Synopsis: Set in the small rural community of "Wandin Valley", the series deals with medical and social issues, through the major characters and the local Bush Nursing Hospital. It also dramatises the lives of the local vet and the National Park Ranger

E STREET

Prod. company: Westside Television Production
Producer: Bruce Best
Directors: Rod Hardy, Geoffrey Nottage, Bill Hughes, Greg Shears, Peter Andrikis
Julian McSwiney
Scriptwriters: Forrest Redlich, David Phillips, Sally Webb, Hugh Stuckey, Mary Dagmar Davies, Tom Galbraith, Grant Frazier, Nicholas Langton
Exec. producer: Forrest Redlich
Assoc. producer: Terrie Vincent
Prod. manager: Lesley Thompson
Script editors: Caroline Stanton, Tim Pye
Prod. designer: Martin McAdoo
Lighting directors: David Scandol, Bob Miller
Length: 52x1 hour
Cast: Penny Cook, Brooke Anderson, Cecily Polson, Leslie Dayman, Catriona Sedgwick, Vic Rasonic, Tony Martin, Warren Jones, Melanie Salomon.
Synopsis: A drama focusing on an inner city suburb and its residents

THE FLYING DOCTORS

Prod. company: Crawford Productions Pty Ltd
Producer: Stanley Walsh
Directors: Brendan Maher, Catherine Millar, Paul Moloney, Mandy Smith
Scriptwriters: Denise Morgan, Tony Morphett, Lula Bayonas, Shane Brennan, Anna Reach, Alan Hopgood
Photography: Barry Wilson, Zenon Batch/Sawka
Sound recordists: Philippe Decrausaz, John McKerrow
Editors: Bill Murphy, Scott McLennan
Exec. producer: Ian Bradley
Assoc. producer: Ray Hennessy
Prod. supervisor: Vince Sotiris
Post prod. supervisor: Sue Warbington
Prod. co-ordinator: Gina Black
Unit managers: Terry Tynan, Fran Lugt
Location manager: Greg Ellis
Prod. secretary: Wendy Walker
Prod. accountant: Kevin Plummer
Post prod. supervisor: Sue Washington
1st asst. directors: Chris Page, Kath Hayden, Michael McIntyre
2nd asst. directors: Anne Custow, Christian Robinson
Continuity: Carmel Torcasio, Anne West
Story editor: Andrew Kennedy
Script editors: Jan Harfield, Neil Lusmore, Jenny Sharp, Matthew Lessing
Casting: Jan Pontefex
Focus pullers: Craig Barden, Gary Bortomley
Clapper/loaders: Ian Phillips, Brett Matthews
Key grips: Craig Dussing, Kerry Boyle
Asst grips: Colin McLean, Wayne Mitchell
Gaffers: Bill Jones, Gary Plunkett
Boom operator: Craig Walmsley, Simon Wilmot
Art director: Andrew Reese
Asst art director: Leigh Eichler
Costume designer: Claire Griffin
Make up: Brad Smith, Maggie Kelley
Hairdressers: Lisa Jones, Christine Miller
Wardrobe supervisor: Keely Ellis
Wardrobe standby: Sue Miles
Robyn Bunning
Props buyer: Kate Murray
Standby props: Paul Kiely, Richard Williamson
Set decorators: Brad King, Scott Ardcock, Simon Price McCutcheon, Richie Dehne
Set construction: Gordon White
Asst editor: Lesley Forsyth
Music editor: John Clifford White
Sound editors: Colin Swan, Michael Carden
Editing assistants: George Parton, Justin Hughes
Mixer: David Harrison, Andrew Jobson
Stunts coordinator: Chris Anderson
Stunts: New Generation Stunts
First box: Con Mancuso, Barista Remail
Runner: Travis Walker
Unit publicist: Susan Elizabeth Wood
Catering: Location One Catering
Studios: Crawford Productions/GTV 9
Mixed at: Crawford Productions
Laboratory: Cinevex
Length: 26 x 47 mins
Gauge: 16mm
Shooting stock: Kodak 7291, 7292
Cast: Robert Grubb (Dr Geoff Standish), Liz Batch (Dr Chris Randall), Lenora Smith (Kate Wellings), Peter O Brien (Sam Patterson), Rebecca Gibney (Emma Patterson), Brett Climo (Dr David Batchelor), Andrew McFarlane (Dr Tom Callaghan), George Kapiniaris (D J), Maxine Fields (Vic Buckley), Val Jellay (Nancy Buckley)
Synopsis: A Royal Flying Doctor Service is located in the outback town of Coopers Crossing. The doctors not only contend with the medical challenges, but also with the small communities in which they live

G.P.

Prod. company: Reedsho v Coote & Carroll/ABC
Exec. producers: Matt Carroll, Sandra Levy
Supervising producer: Sue Masters
Directors: Various
Scriptwriters: Various
Script editor: Greg Millin
Script co-ordinator: Kris Wild
Story department: Matt Ford, Kristen Dunphy
Medical consultants: Dr Stephen Faux, Dr David Whitton
Set prod. designer: Marcus North
Designers: Leigh Tierney, Colin Rudder, Freya Hadley
Assoc. producers: Kim Vecera, Judy Murphy
Costume designer: Michelle Milgate
Composer: Simon Walker
Prod. co-ordinator: Francoise Fombertaux
Prod. manager: Annette Gover
Prod. secretary: Juliet Robinson
1st asst. directors: Gary Stephens, David Young, Alan Parsons, Mark Stanforth
Casting consultants: Maura Fay & Associates
Extras casting: Irene Gaskell
Props buyers: Rory Cronin, Ian Andrewartha
Unit publicist: Virginia Sargent
Studios: ABC
Mixed at: ABC
Length: 1 hr weekly
Gauge: 1" video
1st asst. director: Gary Stephens
Casting consultants: Maura Fay & Associates
Props buyers: Rory Cronin, Ian Andrewartha
Unit publicist: Virginia Sargent
Studios: ABC
Mixed at: ABC
Length: 1 hr weekly
Gauge: 1" video
Cast: Michael Craig (William), John McTernan (Robert), Sarah Chadwick (Cathy), Michael O'Neill (Steve), Denise Roberts (Julie), Brian Rooney (Michael)
Synopsis: Drama series detailing the comings and goings of an inner city medical practice

RAYDAZE

Prod. company: Barron Films
Producers: Paul D Barron, Roz Berrystone
Director: David Rapsey
Scriptwriters: David Rapsey, John Rapsey, Glenda Hambly
Prod. manager: Deb Copland
Prod. secretary: Sharryn Scott
Laboratory: Movielab
Budget: $2.3 million
Gauge: 16mm
Length: 12x30 mins
Synopsis: The Carmichaels, an old Western Australian family proud of their pioneering forebears, clash with the back to basics city bred (and international background) family who buy the neighbouring farm. The results are both funny and dramatic as the various personalities sort out their precarious relationships and respective interests. A humorous contemporary kidadult adventure series

HOME AND AWAY

Prod. company: ATN Channel 7
Dist. company: ATN Channel 7
Producer: Andrew Howe
Directors: various
Story editor: David Worthington
Based on the original idea by: Alan Bateman
Editor: Tracey Hawkins
Exec. producer: Des Monaghan
Prod. co-ordinator: Kate Dehn
Prod. manager: Lisa Fitzpatrick
Prod. accountant: Therese Tran
Prod. assistant: Edwina Searle
1st asst. directors: Michael Allwood, Grant Brown, Cathie Raden
2nd asst. directors: Shane Gow

Directors' assistants	Alex Tinley
	Frances Swan
	Marcus Georgiades
	Liz Perry
Script assistant	Sharon Rosenburg
Casting coordinator	Inese Vogler
Casting consultants	Maura Fay and Assoc
Lighting directors	David Morgan
	David Wood
	David Mitton
Art director	Ken McCann
Costume designer	Lucinda White
Make up	Mary Georgiou
	David Jennings
Hairdressers	Georgina Bush
	Paul Williams
Wardrobe	Rita Crouch
	Francesca Bath
Wardrobe supervisor	Lindy Wyhe
Props buyers.	Philip Cumming
	Kate Saunders
Standby props	Glenn Turner
Set decorator	Carol DiFalco
Musical director	Mike Perjanik
Runner	Peter Pearce
Studios	ATN Channel 7
Shooting stock	Video

Cast: Roger Oakley (Tom) Vanessa Downing (Pippa) Alex Papps (Frank) Sharyn Hodgson (Carly) Adam Willits (Steven) Kate Ritchie (Sally) Nicolle Dickson (Bobby) Norman Coburn (Fisher) Craig Thomson (Martin), Judy Nunn (Asha) Ray Meagher (Alf) Peter Vroom (Lance) Justine Clarke (Roo)

Synopsis A warm and amusing family drama set in the fictional seaside town of Summer Bay

THE MAGISTRATE

Prod. company	Warner Dalton Productions Pty Ltd
Producers	Kim Dalton
	Chris Warner
Director	Kathy Mueller
Scriptwriter	Chris Warner
Based on the original idea by	Chris Warner
Photography	Chris Davis
Sound recordist	Chris Wren
Editors	Barrie Munro
	Kevin Stoer
Exec producers	Graham Benson (TVS)
	Ross Dimsey (ABC)
	Patrizia DeCrescenzo (Rete Italia)
Prod. coordinator	Jennie Crowley
Prod manager	Lorraine Alexander
Unit manager	Ann Bartlett
Location manager	Ali Ali
Prod secretary	Shelley Austin
Prod accountant	Robert Thornsgield
1st asst director	Peter Murphy
2nd asst director	Neil Prend
3rd asst director	Jenane Harrison
Continuity	Emma Peach
Casting	Dina Mann
Extras casting	Jo Rappos
Camera operator	Russell Bacon
Focus puller	Mark Lamble
Clapper/loader	Campbell Miller
Key grip	Max Gaffney
Asst grip	Tony Woolveridge
Gaffer	Andrew Holmes
Electricians	Rob Final
	Mike Cleary
Boom operator	Tony Dickinson
Art director	Dale Mack
Asst art directors	Penny Southgate
	Steven Crosby
Costume designer	Alexandra Tynan
Make up	Paddy Oswald
	Ian Loughnan
France Nero's make-up	Renato Eranzola
Wardrobe	Concetta Raffa
	Joyce Irdach
Props buyer	Norm Jones Ellis
	John Guskelly
Standby props	Glen Dunham
Special effects	Terry Barrow
Asst editors	Hatise Demirel
	Rosemary Jones
Sound editors	Karen Harvey
	Robin Dodds
Mixer	Paul Freeman
Stunts coordinator	Chris Anderson
Stunts	New Generation Stunts
Still photography	Lindsay Hogan
Dialogue coach	Franco Cavaro
Runner	Helen Francis
Publicity	Farmer & King Pty Ltd
Unit publicists	Meredith King
	Mana Farmar
Catering	Backdoor catering
Laboratory	Cinevex
length	6 x 1 hour
Gauge	16mm

Cast: Franco Nero (Paolo) Catherine Wilkin (Claire) Julia Blake (Jean) Dennis Miller (Dennis) Steve Bastoni (Robbie) Victoria Rowlatt (Nicole)

Synopsis. The Magistrate is the story of Paolo Pizzi an Italian investigating magistrate who, following the murder in Italy of his Australian wife, returns to Australia after an absence of 20 years in search for his missing son. It is a story of personal obsession and family reconciliation set against a background of corruption murder and political intrigue

NEIGHBOURS

Prod. company	Grundy Television
Producer	Mark Callan
Directors	Various
Scriptwriters	Various
Based on the original idea by	Reg Watson
Sound recordists	Peter Say
	Grant Vogler
	Bruce Findlay
Prod. designer	Steve Keller
Composer (theme)	Tony Hatch
Exec. producer	Don Battye
Exec. in charge of production	Peter Punie
Prod. co-ordinator	Reita Wilson
Prod manager	Simone
Location manager	Rob Bilinger
Asst directors	Howard Neil
	Don Linke
	Mark Farr
Senior story editor	Ray Kolle
Script editors	Lisa Bowen
	Malcolm Frawley
Story editor	Wayne Doyle
Casting	Jan Russ
Floor managers	Ray Lindsay
	Mark Hancock
	Alan Wilkinson
Lighting supervisors	Stuart de Young
	Rod Harbour
Technical directors	Howard Simmons
	Peter Marino
	Barry Shaw
	Peter Coe
Make up	William McIlvaney,
	Dallas Stephens
Hairdressers	Michael Langhanno
	Paul Patterson
Wardrobe	Mandy Sedewie
	Julianne Jonas
	Gursel Ali
Props buyer	Mark Gowan
Standby props	Sue Birjak
	Rob Treuze
Music editor	Warren Pearson
Runner	Tim Disney
Tutor	Sandra Burritt
Catering.	Helen Lauwers
Post production.	ATV 10 Melbourne

Cast: Anne Charleston (Madge Bishop) Jason Donovan (Scott Robinson), Alan Dale (Jim Robinson) Anne Haddy (Helen Daniels) Shauna O'Grady (Beverly Robinson), Stefan Daniels (Paul Robinson) Fiona Corke (Gail Robinson) Craig McLachlan (Henry Ramsey), Paul Paul Kaan (Des Clarke) Annie Jones (Jane Harris), Ian Smith (Harold Bishop), Kristian Schmid (Todd Landers), Sally Jensen (Kate Landers) Rachel Friend (Bronwyn Davies)

Synopsis: Love 'em or hate 'em, but everyone's got 'em neighbours Ramsay Street the stage for an exciting drama serial drawing back the curtain to reveal the intrigue and passions of Australian families and their neighbours

PUGWALL

Prod company	LJ Productions Limited
Dist company	Nine Network
Producers	John Gauci
	Louise Hall
	Frank Brown
Director	John Gauci
Scriptwriter	Alan Hopgood
Based on the novel by	Margaret Clark
Photography	Phil Cross
Sound recordist	John Phillips
Editor	Alan Ryan
Prod. designer	Patrick Reardon
Composer	Peter Moscos
Prod. supervisor	Frank Brown
Location manager	Deborah Ward
Prod secretary	Gabrielle Christopher
Prod. accountants	Dianne Dennemann
	Tom McLean
Prod assistant	Mana Hyland
1st asst director	John McGlynn
2nd asst director	Mark Chambers
3rd asst director	Mark Middlyman
Continuity	Sally Engelander
Casting	LJs
Technical producer	John Parker
Camera operator	Phil Cross
Sound editor	Paul Reeves
Camera assistant	Peter Stott
Key grip	Barry Brown
Asst grip	Symon
Gaffer	Peter Scott
Boom operator	Stephen Vaughan
Asst art director	Marne Musset
Make up/hairdresser	Patricia Payne
Wardrobe	Rosa Chung
Wardrobe assistant	Jessie Fountain
Props buyer	Marita Musser
Standby props	Chris Koslovic
Asst editor	Susan Ross
Still photography	Tibor Hegedus
Dialogue coach	Merilyn Brend
Catering	Sweet Seductions
Budget	$2.2 million
Length	Eight x one hour
Gauge	Betacam/1" video
Shooting stock	Betacam

Cast: Jason Torrens (Pugwall), Louise Hall (Muzo), Ken James (Dad) Rebecca Blomberg (Jenny), Maxine Fields (Uncle Harry), Emma Snow (Marion)

Synopsis: The adventures of Peter Unwin George Wall and his family and friends. The series portrays adolescent life as reflected in the ideas, speech and behaviour of today's children

ROUND THE TWIST

Prod. company	ACTF Productions Limited

Producer: Antonia Barnard
Director: Various
Scriptwriter: Paul Jennings
Based on the novels by: Paul Jennings
Exec. producer: Patricia Edgar
Supervising producer: Ewan Burnett
Script editor: Esther Steem
Casting: Liz Mullinar's Casting (Melbourne)
Casting consultants: Greg Apps, Tessie Hill
Laboratory: VFL
Post production: AAV
Length: 13 x 25 mins
Gauge: 16mm
Synopsis: Based on the very successful short series by Paul Jennings, this series shows the weird, wacky and spooky world of the Twist family who live in an old lighthouse.

TUESDAY NIGHT LIVE – THE BIG GIG

Production company: ABC TV Entertainment
Producer: Ted Robinson
Director: Ted Robinson
Scriptwriters: Patrick Cook, Wendy Harmer, Matthew Quartermaine, Matthew Parkinson, Jean Kittson, Glynn Nicholas
Prod. designer: Des White
Technical producer: Rick Hunter
Lighting director: Peter Simonidson
Graphic designer: Ian Ruffin
Assistant designer: Nick Hillgoss
Adjutant: Patrick Cook
Exec. producer: Frank Ward
Assoc. producer: Neil Wilson
Prod. manager: Helen Williams
Prod. secretary: Astrid Linden
Producers' assistants: Rosalind Doherty, Dunni Stott
1st asst director: Mark Gibson
2nd asst directors: Don Ryan, Hugh Johnson
Music producer: Chris Boniface
Studio cameras: Roger McAlpine, Stuart Toncray, John Pavlovic, Greg Wilden, Karen Johnson, Darrell Marron, Andrew Schmidt, Peter Holmes
Camera assistants: Grant Austin, John Bowstead, Frank Petrowicz, Chris Loveday
Crane crew: Duncan Buchanan, Lana Kearney
Videotape: Denny Porter, Eva Karlik
Lighting console: John Smith
Vision control: Andrew Topp, Nick Gregorio
Video mixers: Joe Murray, Garry Nilsson
Sound: Gary Schulze, Duane Mitchell, Peter Bradley, Ernie Everett, Chris Cobham, Tim Crook
Staging: Gordon Dunn, Paul Stevens
Make up: Thelma Henson
Wardrobe: Beverly Jasper, Margot Bedford
Set dresser: Mark Reynolds
Props: Alf Camilleri
Special effects: Rod Clack
Music associate: Gordon Gribble
Big Gig theme: Swinging Sidewalks
Set construction: ABC Workshop Highett
Length: One hour
Cast: Wendy Harmer (Host), Glynn Nicholas, Jean Kittson, Doug Anthony Allstars, Empty Pockets (Matthew Parkinson and Matthew Quartermaine)
Synopsis: As the title suggests it is a mixture of live entertainment, a mixture of stand-up comedy, sketch comedy and music with a special guest and a different band each week. A showcase for up-and-coming young comics who have experienced very limited television exposure.

TELEVISION POST PRODUCTION

BODYSURFER

Prod. company: John Saxon Productions/ABC
Producer: Ross Matthews
Director: Ian Barry
Scriptwriters: Suzanne Hewley, Chris Lee, Denis Whitburn
Based on the short stories by: Robert Drewe
Sound recordist: Gunnis Sics
Photography: Jeff Malouf
Editors: Chris Spur, Mike Honey
Prod. manager: John Winter
Prod. designer: Janet Patterson
Exec. producer: John Saxon
Assoc. producer: Ray Brown
Unit manager: John Downie
Location manager: Clint White
Prod. secretary: Sandy Stewart
Prod. accountant: Jill Coverdale
1st asst. director: Russell Whiteoak
2nd asst.director: Lance Mellor
3rd asst. director: Caroline Grose
Continuity: Tracy Padula
Casting: Liz Mullinar
Extras casting: Irene Gaskell
Camera operator: Jeff Malouf
Focus puller: Gary Russell, Brendan Shaw
Key grip: Gary Burden
Asst grip: Nick Hocking
2nd unit photographer: Geoff Manus
2nd unit assistant: Paul Doney
Gaffer: Ken Penygrew
Electricians: Pierre Dunn, Tim Harris
Boom operators: David Pearson, Chris Nilsen
Assistant designer: Helen Bauman
Design assistants: Karen Lund, Ian Usher
Costume designer: Annie Marshall
Hair/make up: Christine Ehlert, Ron Bass, Chara Tripodi
Wardrobe: Terry Lumley
Wardrobe asst: Lorraine Verheyen, Philippa Wooten
Props: Ray Eggleton
Props buyers: Adrian Cannon, Mervyn Asher
Standby props: John King, Sean Hyde
Special effects: The Australian Effex Company
Choreography: Robyn Moore
Set: Richard Kennett, Sandra Carrington, Leanne Stubley, Brett Buchner
Scenic artist: Paul Stockleibank, Tim Sleeman
Carpenter: Mark Newton
Painter: Steve Burns
Set construction: Laurie Dorn, Mal Healey
Asst editors: Martin Connor, Elizabeth Vile
Sound editors: Rodyn Silverson, Phillips Byers
Editing assistants: Larissa Filipic, Tania Brown
Mixer: Stephen Hope
Stunts co-ordinator: Bernie Ledger
Still photography: Gary Johnson
Wrangler: Evanns Chesson
Runner: Paul Epergis
Publicity: George Brown
Catering: Reel Food Catering
Studio: ABC Frenchs Forest
Mixed at: ABC
Laboratory: Colorfilm
Lab. liaison: Martin Hewle
Length: 4x50 minutes
Gauge: 16mm
Shooting stock: 7291/7292
Cast: Peter Kowitz (David), Linda Cropper (Author) Joy Smithers (Lydia) Penne Hackforth Jones (Angela) Patrick Ward (Parnell), Abigail (Mrs James) Felix Nobis (Paul Lang) Tim Robertson (Rex Lang), Clayton Williamson (Young David)
Synopsis: A television adaptation of Robert Drewe's short stories. Over roughly an 18 month period searching beyond mid life crisis, David finds the unanswered questions of his childhood can lead him towards a state of maturity. He realises it is his last hope for reconstructing his fractured family.
Cast: Peter Kowitz (David), Linda Cropper (Author) Joy Smithers (Lydia) Penne Hckforth Jones (Angela) Patrick Ward (Parnell) Abigail (Mrs James), Felix Nobis (Paul Lang), Tim Robertson (Rex Lang), Mary Lou Stewart (Mrs Lang), Clayton Williamson (Young David).

REALMS OF GOLD

Prod. company: Kingcroft/Telesyn/ABC/S4C
Dist. company: J C Williamson/S4C
Producer: Terry Ohlsson
Director: Paul Turner
Scriptwriter: Howard Griffiths
Exec. producers: Russ Dunsey, Dilwyn Jones
Assoc. producers: Richard Meyrick
Prod. co-ordinator: Jenny Crowley
Prod. manager: Lorraine Alexander
Studios: Kingcroft
Length: 90 minutes
Synopsis: A tale based on the real life story of a Welsh minister who travelled to Australia in the 1840s preached the first sermon in Welsh in Australia, made a fortune out of property in the goldfields and started a newspaper which eventually merged into the *Age* group.

DEATH RUN

Prod. company: Death Run Productions/Soundstage Australia
Producers: Robert A. Cocks, Michael T. Foster
Director: Robert A. Cocks
Scriptwriter: Michael T. Foster
Based on an original idea by: Michael T. Foster
Photography: Philip Baker
Editor: Paul Sullivan
Prod. manager: John McGuckin
Prod. secretary: Glenda Cocks
Prod. accountant: Robert Sharpe
1st asst director: Andrew Hutchison
Casting: Angelique Malcolm
Lighting cameraperson: Philip Baker
Camera operator: Philip Baker
Key grip: Rob Greenough
Asst grip: John Whitehead
Gaffer: Brian Archer
Boom operator: Stephen Kyme
Studios: Soundstage Australia Limited, Film Centre Australia
Length: 90 mins
Gauge: 1" video
Shooting stock: Kodak
Cast: Angelique Malcolm, Daniel Lorcan Alfred Carroll, Graeme Bell, Grant Malcolm, David Bertram
Synopsis: A thriller based on astral travel and the attempt to change future events.

THE GREAT WALL OF IRON

Prod. company: Beyond Co-production
Dist. company: Beyond International Group
Producers: Steven Amezdroz, Harold Weldon
Director: Scott Hicks
Scriptwriters: Michael Caulfield, Scott Hicks
Based on the original idea by: Harold Weldon
Photography: Pieter de Vries
Sound recordist: Toivo Lember
Editor: Sarah Bennon
Composers: Colin Bayley, Murray Burns
Exec. producers: Phil Gerlach, Michael Caulfield
Prod. supervisor: Jenny Cousins
Prod. coordinator: Jane McKenna
1st asst director: Deuel Droogan
Camera assistants: Richard Bradshaw, Andrew Barbera
Key grip: Dave Nichols
2nd unit photography: John Brock
2nd unit camera asst: Stuart Quinn
Asst editor: Simon James
Sound editor: Jai Cooke
Editing assistants: Stephen Barber
Narrator: Jack Thompson
Laboratory: Atlab
Lab. liaison: Kerry Jackson
Length: 4x 1 hour
Gauge: 16mm/1" video
Shooting stock: Kodak
Synopsis: *The Great Wall of Iron* is a four part series on one of the world's largest armed forces – the People's Liberation Army of China. The series looks at the remarkable history, the forces today and its future path. Filmed throughout China, it explores the heart and soul of the PLA as well as the length and breadth of its power.

GRIM PICKINGS

Prod. company: South Australian Film Corporation
Producer: Damien Parer
Director: Riccardo Pallazzeri
Scriptwriter: Graeme Koetsveld
Story editor: Peter Gawler
Based on the novel by: Jennifer Rowe
Photography: Roger Dowling
Sound recordist: Toivo Lember
Editor: David Jeeges
Prod. designer: George Liddle
Composer: Paul Schutze
Exec. producer: Jack Blair
Producer attachment: Gus Howard
Prod. co-ordinator: Diane Stuart
Prod. manager: Ross Stagwood
Prod. mgr attachment: Miriam Reidy
Financial supervisor: David Barnes
Prod. accountant: Sharon Jackson
1st asst director: Sonia Jensen
2nd asst director: Monica Pearce
Continuity: Kristin Witcombe
Casting: Liz Mullinar Casting Consultants, S A. Casting Pty Ltd
Lighting cameraperson: Roger Dowling
Camera operator: Roger Dowling
2nd camera operator: David Jarvis
Focus puller: Jo Murphy
Clapper/loader: Michael Fanchucci
2nd camera asst: Gerald Manouge
Key grip: Jim Goldney
Gaffer: Graeme Sheldon
Boom operator: Des Kennedy
Art director: Ken James
Art dept runner: James Roberts
Make-up: Fiona Rees-Jones
Hairdresser: Sash Lamey
Wardrobe: Ruth de la Landa
Wardrobe asst: Ruth Munro
Props buyer: Christopher Webster
Standby props: John Sannucci
Special effects/action co-ordinator: Vic Wilson
Scenic artist: Peter Collins
Stunt hands: Guy Allan, Penny Price, Christine Wood
Carpenters: Brenton Grear, Bernd Kohn, Ken Gardner, Danny Singer, Darren Slaby, Paul O'Reilly, Crispin Joos
Set construction: Lips Studio (S.A.)
Construction manager: David Lightfoot
Construction supervisors: Michael Thomas, Arthur Verre
Still photography: Simon Stanbury
Best boy: Keith 'Sooty' Johnson
Runner: Melinda Paterson
Publicity: Mary Hennessy – GTV 9
Unit publicist: Sharon Rose
Catering: John Kingston (Mexine's)
Studios: Hendon Studios
Studio liaison: Judy Crombie
Mixed at: Hendon Studios
Budget: NFP
Length: 2x 120 mins
Gauge: Videotape (Betacam SP)
Shooting: Betacam
Cast: Lorraine Bayly (Betty), Liddy Clark (Birdie), Max Cullen (Toby), Catherine Wilkin (Kate), David Cameron (Jeremy), Ned Fitzpatrick (Will), Scott Higgins (Chris) Rosey Jones (Susie) Stuart McCreery (Nick) Helen O Connor (Jill).
Synopsis: *Grim Pickings* follows two lines: the strained relationships which surface in a large extended family during an annual gathering or pick (beer great-aunt's apple crop and the mystery surrounding a seemingly accidental death, which is found to have been a murder. Naturally the murder and the family relationships are connected.

KABOODLE 2

Prod. company: ACTV Productions Ltd.
Exec. producer: Patricia Edgar
Supervising producer: Ewan Burnett
Series producer: Sane Campbell
Animators: Peter Viska, Paul Williams, Maggie Geddes, Ned Robinson, Richard Chataway, Michael Cusack
Budget: $658,000
Length: 6 x 24 minutes
Gauge: 1 inch video
Synopsis: Six more half hours of television drama for the under ten age group, this time all animated and regular characters.

THE RESEARCHERS

Prod. company: CSIRO Film and Video Centre
Producers: Malcolm Paterson, Nick Pitsas
Scriptwriters: Paul Hewkor, Marianne Lacham
Sound recordist: Robert Kerton
Exec. producer: Nicholas J Alexander
Prod. manager: Donna Mann
Length: 12x5 mins
Gauge: 16mm/Betacam
Synopsis: CSIRO is Australia's premier research organisation working for the benefit of Australia's industries and its people. This series looks at the efforts of CSIRO's researchers and how their projects are identifying and solving todays problems – and discovering tomorrow's opportunities. ■

CENSORSHIP LISTINGS

JANUARY 1989

G (GENERAL EXHIBITION)

Charles Dickens' Little Dorrit Part 2 Little Dorrit's Story J Brabourne, UK, 176 mins, Hoyts

Ernest Saves Christmas S Williams/D Claybourne USA 91 mins, Village Roadshow

More Light (mus title not shown in English) Not shown USSR, 92 mins, Trade Representative of the USSR

Oliver & Company Silver Screen Partners III, USA, 73 mins Village Roadshow

PG (PARENTAL GUIDANCE)

Accidental Tourist, The L Kasdan/C Okun/M. Gritke, 120 mins, Village Roadshow S(i-l i) O(adult concepts)

Adventures of Baron Munchausen, The T Schulsky UK, 124 min Fox Columbia, V(i m i)

Australia Daze (a) G. Isaac/P Fiske Australia, 76 mins, Velate Holdings, L(i-m g) O(adult concepts)

Beaches. M Jennings-South/E Brackelsner-Martel/B Midler, USA, 120 mins, Village Roadshow L(i m j), O(adult concepts)

Bullseye E Rosen, Australia, 96 mins Hoyts, L(f-l g) V(i-l-j) O(sexual allusions)

Forbidden Territory (main title not shown in English). Mosfilm Productions, USSR, 92 mins Trade Representative of the USSR, O(adult concepts)

Friend Mosfilm Studios, USSR, 92 mins, Trade Representative of the USSR, O(adult concepts)

Ring of the Children Xide Film Studio China, 103 mins, Ronin, L(i m j)

Les Annees Sandwiches (Sandwich Years) P Dussart, France, 100 mins, Filmpac Holdings, L(i m j) O(adult concepts)

Old Well (main title not shown in English) Xi an Film Studios China, 138 mins Ronin, L(i m j) O(adult concepts)

Painted Faces (main title not shown in English) L.Ho/M.Fong, Hong Kong, 111 mins Chinatown Cinema O(adult concepts)

Philippines My Philippines M Delofin/C.Nash Australia/The Philippines, AFI, L(i-m j) O(adult concepts, nudity)

Twins H Reitman, USA, 102 mins UIP V(i l g) V(i-l g) O(sexual allusions)

(a) Registered/classified/approved subject to the special condition that all advertising includes the words "Censorship Warning. This film contains coarse language."

M (MATURE AUDIENCES)

1969 D Goodnik/B Badalato USA, 95 mins, Filmpac, L(f m j) O(drug use)

Blowing Hot and Cold R. Colosimo Australia, 85 mins, Rosa Colosimo V(i m j) L(i m g) O(adult concepts)

Dangerous Liaisons N Heyman/R. Mooujean, USA, 118 mins Village Roadshow S(f m-j) O(adult concepts)

Fatal Attraction — Alternative Version S. Jaffe/S Lansing, USA, 117 UIP S(f m j) V(i m j)

For Queen & Country T Bevan UK, 104 minutes, CEL, L(f-m-j) V(i m j) O(adult concepts)

Fresh Horses D Berg USA 102 mins, Hoyts Distribution, L(i m-g) O(adult concepts)

Halloween 4 — The Return of Michael Myers P Freeman USA 86 mins V(f m g) S(i m g) L(i m g)

High Spirits S Woolley/D Saunders, UK, 97 mins Village Roadshow V(i m g) S(i m g) O(adult concepts)

Hungry Feeling — The Life and Death of Brendan Behan, A. A. Miller USA, 81 mins Icarus L(i m j) O(adult concepts)

Incident at Raven's Gate R. de Heer/M Rosenberg Australia, 92 mins, Filmpac, L(i m-g) V(i m-j) O(mild horror)

Iron Eagle II J Kotzky/S Herd/J Kemsley, Canada/Israel, 99 min Fox Columbia V(i m-g)

January Man, The N Jewison/E Swerdlow, USA, 96 mins UIP V(i m j) L(i m g)

La Dolce Vita. Rama Films/Cinecitta/Pathe Consortium Cinema Paris1 Italy 174 mins, Newvision O(adult concepts)

Last Rites P McCormack/D Bellisario USA, 100 mins UIP S(i m j) V(i m j) L(i m g)

Little Vera (main title not shown in English) Gorky Film Studios USSR, 138 mins, Trade Representative of the USSR, S(i m j) O(adult concepts)

Love at Stake M Grasloff USA, 87 mins, Hoyts O(sexual allusions)

Mississippi Burning F Zollo/B. Colesberry, USA, 126 mins Village Roadshow V(i m j) L(i m-j)

Mujeres al Borde de un Ataque de Nervios (Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown) A Almodovar Spain, 89 mins Hoyts O(adult concepts) L(i m j)

My Stepmother is an Alien. R. Levy/R. Parker USA, 108 mins, Hoyts, O(sexual allusions)

Mystic Pizza. M Levinson/S Rosenfelt, USA, 103 mins, Newvision, L(i m j) O(adult concepts)

Operation Pink Squad (main title not shown in English) Hoi Wing, Hong Kong 92 mins, Yu Enterprises, V(i m g) L(i m g)

Paperhouse S Raddyliffe/T Bevan, UK, 92 mins Vestron Australia O(adult concepts)

Rain Man M Johnson, USA, 129 mins, UIP, L(f m g) O(adult concepts)

Talk Radio E Pressman, USA, 107 mins, Village Roadshow, L(i-m-j) O(adult concepts drug use)

Things and Other Stuff M Lynch Australia, 90 mins, Pyodawn L(f m-g) O(adult concepts, drug use)

Three Against the World (main title not shown in English) Golden Harvest, Hong Kong, 86 mins, Chinatown Cinema V(i m g) L(i m g) O(adult concepts)

Time of Destiny, A A Thomas, USA, 116 mins, Hoyts L(i m j) O(adult concepts)

Women's Prison. Alan and Eric Films Hong Kong, 90 mins, Chinatown Cinema, V(f m g) L(i m g) O(adult concepts)

R (RESTRICTED EXHIBITION)

Big Heat, The. Tsui Hark, Hong Kong, 87 mins, Chinatown Cinema, V(f m g)

Phantasm II R. Quesada USA, 95 mins Village Roadshow V(i-m g) O(horror)

Slipping into Darkness J Krane, USA, 85 mins, Village Roadshow V(i m-g) S(i m g) L(i m g)

FILMS REFUSED REGISTRATION

Her Vengeance (main title not shown in English) Paragon Films Hong Kong, 81 mins, Chinatown Cinema O(gratuitous sexual violence)

FEBRUARY 1989

G (GENERAL EXHIBITION)

Joe Leahy's Neighbours P Connolly/R. Anderson, Papua New Guinea, 90 mins Ronin

Life and Death of Colonel Blimp, The M Powell/E. Pressburger UK, 163 mins, Urban Eye

PG (PARENTAL GUIDANCE)

Burbs, The L Breazner/M Finnall, USA, 99 mins UIP, O(adult concepts) V(i l j) L(i-l-j)

Actress (main title not shown in English) Tomoyuki Tanaka/Kon Ichikawa, Japan, 126 mins Quality Films, O(adult concepts)

Big Military Parade Guangxi Film Studios, China 99 mins, Ronin, L(i m j) O(adult concepts)

Crocodile Dundee II J Cornell/J Scott Australia/USA 108 mins Hoyts, L(i l g) V(i-l-g) O(drug references)

Cudzoziemka Film Polski/Zespoly Filmowy Oko Poland 101 mins Tip Top Travel O(adult concepts)

Eight Men Out S. Pilsbury/M. Sanford USA, 119 mins, Village Roadshow L(i m g) O(adult concepts)

Her Alibi K Earish USA, 92 mins Village Roadshow L(i m-j) V(i l-j) O(sexual allusions)

Hibiscus Town (main title not in English). Shanghai Film Studio China, 134 mins, Ronin, O(adult concepts)

Houses Are Full of Smoke, The A Francovich USA, 175 mins, Le Clezio Films, O(adult concepts)

Just Ask for Diamond. L. James, UK, 93 mins, Filmpac V(f-l g) O(adult concepts)

Onset of an Unknown Age Lenfilm Studio/Dovzenko Studio, USSR, 73 mins Trade Representative of the USSR, V(i m-j) O(adult concepts)

Skipstream G Kurtz UK/Turkey, 102 mins, Village Roadshow V(i l-g) L(i l g) O(sexual allusions)

Three Fugitives L. Shuler-Donner, USA, 94 mins, Village Roadshow L(f-l-g) V(i-l-j)

M (MATURE AUDIENCES)

Aces Go Places v the Terracotta Hit C Chang, Hong Kong, 102 mins, Chinatown Cinema, V(i m g)

Art Photo (main title not shown in English): Luck Film Production Company Hong Kong, 75 mins, Yu Enterprises, O(nudity sexual allusions) L(i m-g)

Assault of the Killer Bimbos D De Couteau/J. Schouweiler, USA, 80 mins, Newvision L(f m g) V(i m g) O(adult concepts)

Bert Rigby You're A Fool G Shepre USA/UK, 93 mins, Village Roadshow L(i m g)

Cookie L. Mark, USA, 92 mins Village Roadshow L(i m-g)

Cousins W Allyn, USA, 113 mins, UIP L(i m-g) O(adult theme)

Dead Calm. G Miller/T Hayes/D Mitchell, Australia Village Roadshow V(i m-j) S(i m j) O(adult concepts) L(i m g)

Deceptar Six S Cunningham/P Markey USA, 98 mins, Fox Columbia Tri Star (horror) L(f-m g)

Fly II, The S Jaffe, USA, 104 mins, Fox Columbia Tri Star O(horror) S(i m j) L(i m-g)

Homeboy A. Marshall/E. Kastner USA, 114 mins Palace Entertainment V(i m-g) L(f m-g)

Le Patroquet R. Dumanme, France, 91 mins, The Other Films O(adult concepts)

Magnet Tor Film Unit Poland/West Germany 173 mins, Tip Top Travel, V(i-m-g) S(i m g)

Mr Vampire Saga 4 (main title not shown in English) Golden Harvest/So Ho Films, Hong Kong 92 mins, Chinatown Cinema V(f-m g)

My Name's Harlequin (main title not in English) Belarus Films, USSR, 129 mins Trade Representative of the USSR, V(i m j) S(i m-j) O(immoble anti social behaviour)

Pathfinder J Jacobsen, Norway, 86 mins, Fox Columbia Tri Star, V(i m j)

Pelle Erobreren (Pelle the Conqueror) P Holst, Sweden, 149 mins, Hoyts, O(adult concepts)

State of Shock D Bradbury, Australia 58 mins David Bradbury L(f m-j)

Straw Bells Dovzhenko Kiev Film Studios, USSR, 137 mins Trade Representative of the USSR, V(f m g)

They Live L. Franco, USA, 94 mins, Fox Columbia Tri Star V(f-m g) L(i m g) S(i m-g)

Torch Song Trilogy H Gottfried, USA, 118 mins, Hoyts, L(i m j) O(adult concepts)

Urinal J Greyson, Canada 94 mins, AFI, O(sexual allusions, adult concepts)

When I Fall in Love T Hackford/L. Zinkin/L Sander USA, 126 mins, Village Roadshow L(i m g) S(i-m-j) V(i m j)

R (RESTRICTED EXHIBITION)

36 Filette E Schlumberger/V Seyfoux France, 88 mins Ronin, S(i m j) O(adult concepts)

Braddock — Missing in Action III M Golan/Y Globus, USA, 103 mins, Hoyts Distribution V(i m g)

Brief Encounter H. Chang/D Lau, Hong Kong, 93 mins Yu Enterprises V(i m g)

City War C Lau Hong Kong 93 mins, Chinatown Cinema V(f m g)

Kamikaze Hearts H Legler Hennessy Bivkin, USA 74 mins Australian Film Institute, O(drug abuse) S(i m j)

Moon, Star & Sun Golden Harvest, Hong Kong, 100 mins Chinatown Cinema, ***

On the Run (main title not in English) Paragon Films Hong Kong, 88 mins Chinatown Cinema, V(f m g)

FILMS REFUSED REGISTRATION

Get Me While I'm Hot Paradise Visuals 76 mins USA, A Newman, S(f-h g)

Orgies J Tanner USA, 83 mins, G R. Hill, S(f-h g)

Vanessa Del Rio Starring in a Gourmet Quickie Gourmet Video Collections, 29 mins, A. Newman S(f h g)

FILMS BOARD OF REVIEW

Moon Star & Sun (main title not in English) (a). Golden Harvest, Hong Kong, 100 mins Chinatown Cinema, ***

Decision reviewed. Refusal to register by the Film Censorship Board

Decision of the Board Direct the Film Censorship Board to Register and Classify R

(a) See also under (R — Restricted Exhibition)

Films examined in terms of the Customs (Cinematograph Films) Regulations as State film censorship legislation are listed below

An explanatory key to reasons for classifying non "G" films appears hereunder

	Frequency		Explicitness/Intensity			Purpose	
	Infrequent	Frequent	Low	Medium	High	Justified	Gratuitous
S (Sex)	i	f	l	m	h	j	g
V (Violence)	i	f	l	m	h	j	g
L (Language)	i	f	l	m	h	j	g
O (Other)	i	f	l	m	h	j	g

Title	Producer	Country	Submitted length	Applicant	Reason for decision

• THE LAST WORD

PRODUCER BOB WEIS, WHO RECEIVED FFC FUNDING FOR THE MINI-SERIES *CASSIDY* (AFTER AN INITIAL KNOCKBACK) MAKES SOME PERTINENT COMMENTS ABOUT FILM FUNDING'S PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE...

WITH THE WINDING BACK of the accelerated tax deductions available for investment in Australian qualifying films and the setting up of the Australian Film Finance Corporation (FFC) the whole context of film financing and production in Australian has been radically changed. The problem is that nobody really knows what the new arrangements are or how they are going to work. Certainly, the outlines are known. The FFC has $70 million to underwrite a production slate of $100 million for qualifying Australian films – but what is it looking for and on what basis will it invest? It would be a mistake to think that either FFC staff or the board has any clearly worked out guidelines or simple answers. They are as much on the learning curve as the producers who are approaching them.

One thing that is emerging is that market realities (as opposed to market fantasies) will play a big part in decision-making. In the latter days of 10BA financing the formula became X per cent presale = 100 per cent financing. Some (many) producers felt that as long as they had the revenue guarantees necessary to trigger the investment that their marketing responsibilities were finished. Investors were ahead, producers got their fees and brokers got their cut along the way. As governments fiddled with the rate of depreciation and marginal personal income tax rates, X per cent went from 10 to 40 and finally to 80 per cent of a budget. Budgets were set (in many cases) to the formula rather than the potential market value of the property.

The FFC wants to change all that. Producers will need to argue the viability of their budgets based on likely returns and will need to present the argument with something more than rhetoric.

Presales are obviously a strong argument because they present evidence of market interest by end users and they provide guaranteed returns, which at the end of a long board meeting always look better than a nod and a wink. Presales are problematic, however. End users offering to pre-buy generally know the level at which their offer must be pitched to make the project go. Thus by demanding that they be in place, there is a tendency to discount the future value of the project against the need to have sales. By producing a solid market plan, however, a producer may be able to demonstrate some thought about market realities without discounting any future sales. A commitment from a major US distributor to release a picture with a minimum number of prints and a guaranteed advertising budget would be a strong demonstration of this kind.

One needs to distinguish here between theatrical films and television. Usually television presales are at a much higher level than sales made after completion.

Having sales and/or a market plan helps to fix the kind of price range that the production should be pitched in. Often films cost more than their potential revenues and sometimes they are underbudgeted, to the detriment of their eventual returns. The FFC will be looking at this issue closely.

Of course, this is terrific in theory, but the question that needs to be asked is, "Who does the assessment and what is their expertise?" In the obvious cases of silly budgeting and invented market demand the task should be reasonably simple. The problem gets knotted around whose assessment can be relied upon. For every right guess there is an example of a dreadful mistake. The studios that turned down *ET*, *Star Wars*, *Malcolm* and *Mad Max*. The ones who made *Heaven's Gate*, *Ishtar* and *Coolangatta Gold*.

Nobody has a lock on being wrong or on getting it right. The thing that keeps you humble here is that we have all made some whopping mistakes. Now the problem is that with the FFC being the only game in town, you wouldn't want your picture to be one that you were right on and they got wrong. Clearly some factors will tell.

Track record hopefully will carry weight. Producers stake their future on their judgement. If they've come up right a few times it should make a difference. Some recent anecdotes (that don't bear repeating) indicate that some FFC staff don't know who they are talking to when meeting filmmakers. This could be an example of Oz egalitarianism or just poor briefing, but things will have to change if these exchanges are to yield more light than heat. In the producer camp there seem to be two polarized views as to assessment on creative elements. Many were worried that the FFC would favour a particular kind of filmmaking to the exclusion of all others – a house style, in much the way the AFC developed a profile to their investments pre-10BA. They argued that the deal ought to be the only basis for funding.

The other argument is that the desirability of the project should be based on an assessment of the creative elements and only then should the deal be examined with a view to facilitating funding.

Both positions have their complications and the jury is out as to how the FFC will behave. It is easy to draw the extreme positions in which one factor or the other would be decisive, however, it is not so easy to see how the board will grapple with this problem as a matter of policy. It is impossible in this crazy mixture of art and commerce to make any meaningfully objective decisions. The bullet needs to be bitten.

A likely outcome will be that producers with track records will put a package of films to the FFC with other, less experienced producers in tow. This will give confidence to the FFC that some of the judgements have been adequately made and that the productions will be delivered with a known degree of finish. By providing producers with funding for a slate of production it will help to bring the industry into a more rational mode of operation, giving more marketing and distribution power to production companies and a more reliable cash flow for forward planning, staffing and future development. From the FFC point of view it will provide a greater spread of its risk.

The Screen Production Association of Australia argued during the planning stages of the FFC that the body should have both a Melbourne and a Sydney office of equal importance. With a one-door funding policy in place the dangers of over centralization cannot be overstressed. I would hate to see a slide into a Sydney main office with a mere mail room branch office in Melbourne. To further this aim I would recommend that the board meets at each office alternately and that each city has a different subset of members of the total board at them. Clearly two or three members would need to sit on both groups to provide continuity of policy. Further, there should be some confidentiality between the two offices. In theory it should be possible to get an approval from one office for a project that the other office didn't like. From the relatively short experience so far of dealing with the FFC it is clear that the Corporation's staff will need to quickly learn a lot about the film industry and who the players are. They are also going to have to decide whether they are behaving like a bank, i.e. with a commercial attitude to investment and their client base, or as a subsidy distributing body akin to the Australia Council. The confusion in roles is evidenced by some head-shaking on both sides.

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Some producers have been approaching the bank with the view that it is there to prop up the life style to which they have become accustomed and now feel it is their right to have maintained at the tax-payers' expense. On the other hand, some producers have felt that the lack of feedback from FFC staff on deal terms and board decisions has created a sense of a Film Bulgaria model that is frightening to contemplate.

It is still early days and a lot of yelling, talking, arguing, negotiating and crystal ball gazing is yet to come. Mistakes will be made and policies will come and go. In the interest of a dynamic industry it is important for all the players to contribute to the ongoing debate. ■

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